

# SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

*Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, by Frank Tousey.*

No. 101.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 28, 1900.

Price 5 Cents.

## THE BRADYS ON THE GREAT LAKES; OR TRACKING THE CANADA GANG. BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.



"Up with your hands!" yelled Old and Young King Brady in the same breath. The gang in the approaching boat were taken completely by surprise and threw up their hands without a protest.



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## THE BRADYS ON THE GREAT LAKES;

OR,

## Tracking the Canada Gang.

BY A NEW YORK DETECTIVE.

### CHAPTER I.

#### A HARD GANG.

"There is no doubt that you will find those rascals somewhere up in the wild region about Lake Superior or Huron," said the Chief of the Secret Service, as he tilted back in his chair.

"One thing is sure. This country never was troubled with such a pestiferous band of criminals and cutthroats in all its history.

"Their influence is felt from one end of the country to the other. They descend like vultures upon the States, and murder and steal to their hearts' content, and then, immediately upon the approach of danger of arrest, they flee to the wilds of Canada, and are safe.

"Somewhere upon those lakes they have a rendezvous. I tell you they are a power in the land."

Old and Young King Brady listened to this statement quietly.

The two keenest detectives in the world they were. They had just finished a very thrilling and difficult case, and were ready to take up this new matter.

The chief's words were no exaggeration of facts. The "Canada Gang," as they were known, had made matters lively in the Northwest.

Their haunts were in an inaccessible part of the country, and they were shrewd enough to keep so near the line that for petty offenses there was no redress.

But a startling crime had been charged to them, which

had at last aroused the authorities of the whole United States.

Colonel Daniel Maynard, a very wealthy merchant of Chicago, had started on a long summer's cruise with his family through the Great Lakes.

Far up in the Superior region he had last been seen.

The yachting party had consisted of himself, his wife and daughter Alice, a son Hugh, and a chum of his son's, young Weldon Smith, besides the crew of the yacht, nine men in all, engineer, cook, sailing master and deck hands.

The Satellite was a fine steam yacht, and was a veritable floating palace.

The party, not suspecting danger, had been decoyed ashore by members of the Canada gang.

Mrs. Maynard, with young Weldon Smith and the crew, were left aboard the yacht.

Colonel Maynard was found murdered in cold blood far in the wilds. Hugh and Alice were missing.

It was supposed that they had been carried away into the wilds, perhaps to be held for ransom.

Not content with this, the gang descended upon the yacht after dark and set it on fire.

It drifted into a cove, and burned to the water's edge. Four of the crew lost their lives.

A lumber schooner chanced to come along, and picked up the others, Mrs. Maynard included.

They were taken to a nearby fort, and finally reached Chicago.

A party of officers at once set out for the locality to rescue the prisoners and break up the gang.



But they found only the wreck of the Satellite, and had a long-distance fight with rifles with the gang.

After losing three men they were obliged to return.

Of course all this created a sensation throughout the country.

By special act of the Canadian Parliament it was agreed that the Dominion authorities should co-operate with those from the States.

But every attempt to round up the Canada gang failed.

The outlaws grew bolder, and made more open reprisals, not only on settlers but the sailing craft in those waters.

Thus matters were when an appeal was sent to the Chief of the Secret Service.

He at once gave the matter his attention.

It was his conclusion that if a few of the ringleaders of the gang could be made an example of the gang would become disorganized.

"There are two men in the service who can do that trick," he declared, "and they are the Bradys."

The chief recognized the fact that to send an armed body of men into the region was folly.

Two smart, shrewd and daring detectives could do more than a regiment of soldiers.

So it happened that the chief called the Bradys into his office and held a consultation with them.

"That lady, Mrs. Maynard, is very much distraught over her daughter's fate," said the chief. "Now, there is no doubt that she is held prisoner. There is also the young man, her brother.

"Not only must they be rescued, but Bill Blaney, the leader, and others must be corralled."

The Bradys listened with interest.

"It will require shrewd work," said the chief. "You must manage to get in with the gang or something of the sort. That is all."

Old King Brady carelessly bit off a chew of tobacco from a big plug, and said grimly:

"You've got to tie up the leaders. Then the gang will go to pieces."

"Just my idea," said the chief, eagerly. "Then you'll take the case?"

"Oh, yes," agreed the two detectives. "We will start for Superior at once."

The chief rubbed his hands with delight.

"I wish you success, and I know that you will have it," he declared. "Nobody else in this country can handle that case as you can."

"You give us too much credit," laughed Harry. "We are not infallible."

"You cannot come much nearer the mark. You have not lost a case."

This was the truth.

In all their detective career the two Bradys had never failed to solve every case undertaken by them.

It was small wonder that their reputation was established, and their fame world-wide.

Harry Brady was a pupil and protege of Old King Brady.

The two were fast friends, and worked together with great success.

The old detective had taken a great fancy to the younger man, and now they were inseparable.

After they left the chief's office the two detectives made quick preparations for their departure.

It was their desire to leave New York quietly.

So no publicity was given to their purpose to visit Canada, and they skipped out of New York unnoticed.

But as they boarded the train at the Grand Central Depot, a man of remarkable appearance stepped onto the platform behind them.

He was tall, with a shrewd, sharp cast of features, and dressed in rather slovenly fashion.

He glanced furtively at the detectives, then brushed past them and secured a seat in the car.

Harry gave a start, and glanced at Old King Brady.

"Did you notice that fellow?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Where did you ever see him before?"

"I was trying to think. He looks like Dick Young, the Denver bank breaker. But I think he is a little bit taller."

"Dick Young," repeated Harry. "I'll wager that's who he is. He gave us a keen glance."

"Does he know us?"

"Oh, I dare say."

"Well," said Old King Brady, slowly, "it will pay us to keep an eye on him. I can see that he is a crook all right enough."

"Ah! You think so?"

"I do."

So when the Bradys entered the car they took a seat not far behind the fellow.

Dick Young, if he it was, took no further notice of the detectives.

He carried a yellow leather satchel in the contents of which he appeared to be deeply interested.

The train rushed on for hours. It carried the Bradys steadily near their destination.

They intended first to go to Chicago and interview Mrs. Maynard.

Then they would either secure a small sailing craft and start for Lake Superior, or go thither by land.

If they did the latter thing, they would have to travel much overland through great woods and dense wilds.

So on the whole they believed that the easiest and best way was to go by water.

There were any number of small yachts, one of which could be secured for a month's cruise.

In this the Bradys believed they could coast along the shores of the Great Lakes, and finally locate the gang.

Suddenly Dick Young arose from his seat and, pulling out a cigar, started for the smoker.

As he left his car seat the detectives watched him closely.

They saw a slip of white paper drop from his coat as he arose.

Nobody else in the car was in a position to see this.



To them it would have meant nothing; to the detectives a good deal.

As soon as Young had left the car Harry arose and sauntered down the aisle.

He took the seat occupied by Young and picked up the paper. Old King Brady joined him.

Harry read the slip and gave a great start.

"By jove!" he said. "Here is a go!"

"What is it?"

"Read it."

The old detective took the slip and read:

"Memo: Negotiate bonds in New York. Draw on National Bank. Go to Chicago to meet Blaney Thursday. In the woods after that."

The old detective did not need to puzzle over this.

There were no hieroglyphics which he did not understand. He saw all plain enough.

"By jove!" he exclaimed. "Harry, this Dick Young is one of the Canada gang."

"That is just the truth," agreed Young King Brady.

## CHAPTER II.

### SHADOWING THE SHARPER.

"It is easy to understand this bit of memorandum. Dick has been in New York to negotiate some bonds which were probably stolen. He will meet Bill Blaney in Chicago."

"Yes."

"We will be present at that meeting, if nothing happens."

"If we can get Blaney into our clutches on the start—that is a long step toward success."

"Well, I should say."

"It now behooves us——"

"What?"

"To keep an eye on Dick Young. We must not lose sight of him."

"Just so."

The detectives, however, had no fear of losing track of Young before reaching Chicago.

It was certain that he was bound for that point, and all that was necessary was to remain on the train and await developments.

It was certainly a piece of luck which put the detectives on the track of their birds right on the start.

So they were in high spirits as they traveled on.

They wondered if Young had recognized them.

But if he had, certainly he had not shown it. So the detectives felt that the chances were with them.

That night they occupied a berth not far from Young.

The next day the conductor entered the car.

Pinned to his coat lapel was a telegram.

It was claimed by Young. The crook read it, then tore it into little bits.

These fell upon the car floor.

Some hours later Harry managed to secure these while Young was in the smoking car.

The contents of the telegram, as they made out by putting the pieces together, was as follows:

"To Richard Young, on board Chicago Limited, number 44: Am obliged to leave. Cannot wait. Bad news from Copper Creek. Come north as quick as you can.

"W. Blaney."

The detectives were crestfallen.

They exchanged glances.

"Humph!" said Old King Brady. "I can't say I like that."

"Nor I," agreed Harry.

"It's a bad show we'll have to get track of Blaney now."

Thus, just at the moment when success seemed assured the detectives had their hopes dashed.

But they were by no means discouraged. They still had Young to shadow.

The effect upon Young seemed scarcely less pleasant.

He was exceedingly downcast, and sank down in the corner of his car seat and remained in a reverie all the rest of that day.

The next morning when the train began its run through the suburbs of Chicago, Young arose and went forward to the smoker.

The detectives did not follow him.

But time went on and he did not return.

Then Harry arose and went forward. Young was not in the smoker.

The young detective went through to the blind baggage; but not a trace of Young could he find.

The young detective was astounded.

He went back to his partner, and said:

"Young is not on the train."

"What?" exclaimed Old King Brady.

"That is true. I have been through every car."

"But you must be wrong. He could not get off. We have not slowed up anywhere."

"I don't care. He is not aboard this train."

Old King Brady went forward.

He saw that Harry was right. No one answering Young's description was on board the train.

What did it mean?

How could he have got off? This was a mystery.

The old detective was very thoughtful for a long while. Then his face cleared.

"I think I have it," he said.

"What?"

"Young is still on board the train."

Harry was astonished.

"Where is he?" he asked.

"He is in disguise."

The young detective gasped.



"That is it!" he agreed. "Why did I not think of it? He is in disguise. Then he suspects us."

"Yes."

"But it also explains why he was not uneasy at sight of us. He believed it easy enough to shake us."

"Just so."

"Now can you tell me which man in that next car is Mr. Young?"

"We ought to know him by his yellow traveling bag. There is a man with blue glasses in the third seat from the door."

Harry was convinced.

"It's all right," he said. "I can penetrate the disguise now; but it was clever, was it not?"

"Yes. The change of personnel was as pretty a job as I ever saw."

"So it was!"

And thus the Bradys fixed upon the man with the blue glasses as identical with Young, the clever crook.

In spite of the cleverness of the disguise the detectives penetrated it. They knew their man at once.

But they were shrewd.

They took care not to permit Young to know that they had fallen onto his little game.

They kept out of his sight. Nearer the train drew to the Chicago depot.

Young made no attempt to leave the train at any of the little stops before the train entered the Lake Shore Depot.

Here he got off the train.

The Bradys cleverly shadowed him.

If he knew it, he did not show that knowledge. He went at once to the Palmer House.

Here he registered as follows:

"J. H. Moore, New York city."

Then he went to his room and retired.

The Bradys were now in a quandary.

What was to be done?

It was plain that Young had no intention of leaving the city that night.

"There seems to be but one course for us," said Harry.

"What?"

"Simply keep on his track until we reach the Superior country. Perhaps we can follow him right up to the headquarters of the gang."

But Old King Brady shook his head.

"That will be hardly possible," he said.

"Well, we will go as far as we can."

"I have been thinking of a scheme."

"What is it?"

The old detective slowly produced his plug of tobacco and made his inevitable bite at it.

It was the only time at which he used the weed in any form.

But when confronted by a puzzling problem or in anything of a quandary, he was sure to resort to a bite at the plug.

What its effect could possibly be upon his mental system

could only be guessed; but he was almost sure forthwith to hit upon a scheme.

And the present case was not an exception.

"I think it will be possible to join forces with the fellow," he said.

Harry gave a start.

He was surprised.

"How is that?" he exclaimed. "How will you do that?"

"Easy enough. To-morrow morning we will appear here in the cleverest of disguises."

"Well?"

"We have a specimen of Blaney's chirography. We will imitate it and present to Young a note from his chief advising him of our character as newly elected members of the gang."

"The Canada gang?"

"Yes."

Harry was almost aghast with the stupendousness of the scheme.

"By jove!" he exclaimed. "Will not that be playing with fire?"

"We must always play with fire to win a desperate game."

"That is true. But what next?"

"The supposed message from Blaney will instruct him to take us along with him to the Superior rendezvous."

"Whew! that is excellent; but when we get there—we are outnumbered ten to one."

Old King Brady snapped his fingers.

"We can easily overcome that," he said readily.

"I don't understand."

"Why, we will never allow Young to join his confreres."

"But——"

"It is just as easy as can be. When within striking distance of the gang, we tie Young up. We then have one of our men and the others located. We will summon a posse from the nearest point and spring the trap on them. The game will be won."

The daring of the thing, and yet its complete possibility, dazzled the young detective.

"No use," he said. "I can never hope to equal you as a plotter, partner. It is a great scheme."

"All depends upon——"

"What?"

"Our ability and skill."

"I will do all I can."

"I know that. Now let us go to our room and prepare that forged message."

The Bradys at once were shown to a room in the hotel. They called for pens, ink and paper, and at once began work.

Old King Brady, with all his other accomplishments, was a clever penman as well as artist.

It did not take him long to master the peculiarities of Blaney's chirography.

After an hour's practice he was able to imitate it completely.



The message was written.

The detectives next planned their disguise.

They were masters at this art, and soon had effectually concealed their personal identity.

With the aid of cosmetics and a complexion and hair stain, which, however, a simple soap would quickly remove, they made themselves over.

So that when they appeared in the lobby of the Palmer House the next day they were beyond recognition.

They paid their bill and then sat in the office for a while.

They saw Young come down for breakfast. After he came out Old King Brady went up to the clerk's desk.

"Does Mr. Richard Young have a room here?" he asked, in a voice loud enough for the noted crook to hear.

### CHAPTER III.

#### ON THE LAKES.

Precisely what Old King Brady had expected and desired happened.

The clerk looked over his book.

"No, sir," he replied. "No such person here."

"Thank you."

Young had overheard the remarks. He had turned and fixed his gaze upon the old detective.

Old King Brady joined Harry.

He again raised his voice.

"Blaney was off in his calculations," he said. "Young ought to be here now. He is behind time."

This settled it.

Young walked forward and accosted the detectives.

"Who are you looking for?" he asked.

Old King Brady feigned suspicion.

"Nobody in particular," he said.

"Yes, you are. I heard you ask the clerk for a man by the name of Young."

Old King Brady looked furtively at the crook.

"What of it?" he growled. "He ain't here. What's that to you?"

Young smiled, and it was plain that he was disarmed.

"That's all right, boys," he said. "Did Blaney send you here?"

Old King Brady was still suspicious.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am the man you are looking for."

"You?"

"Yes."

The detectives feigned incredulity.

"Are you stopping here?"

"Yes. I was to have met Blaney here; but he is gone. Fearing trouble I registered under another name. Now what can I do for you, boys?"

Both detectives affected delight.

"Well, we're in luck to find ye," said Harry. "We've got a message from Bill for ye."

Young was interested.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Here it is."

Young took the forged message and read it with apparent interest. For some moments he was silent.

Then he said:

"All right, boys. We will start at once. I'll first settle my bill."

Young went up to the desk and settled his bill. Then he took his yellow bag and joined the detectives.

In the message their names had been mentioned as Bill Harlow and Jeff Smith.

"Now, lads," said Young in a fraternizing way, "my plan is as follows: We will take the cars to Marquette, on the shores of Lake Superior. I have there a small steam launch. In this we will run across to the Canada shore."

"All right, boss," said Old King Brady. "We are under orders."

"Have you any money for your tickets?"

"Y-yes," said Old King Brady, hesitatingly. "I suppose we must pay our own fare."

"Well," said Young with a grin, "you'll have to see Bill about that. Now to see about the trains."

This did not take long.

It was found that a train would leave for Milwaukee within the hour.

So the three started for the depot. A short while later they were en route for Marquette.

The Bradys played their hand with consummate skill.

They certainly deceived Young in a most thorough manner.

They asked all manner of questions about the gang and its headquarters, and learned much of value.

Not far from the mouth of the Nigigon River there was a chain of wooded islands.

The Indian name of these was Umbagoniae. Among these islands, and in the fastnesses of an unexplored wilderness, the Canada gang made their home.

"We can defy the world," declared Young. "We fear nobody. We can hide where they can never find us. Or, if they should, we could defend our position against an army."

"Your retreat must be almost impregnable," said Harry.

"You will see when you get there," said Young.

As for the Bradys, they felt that this could be none too soon.

Their success thus far was very gratifying. Nothing could have worked better.

It is a long trip from Chicago to Marquette, Michigan; but finally they reached that enterprising city.

They were now in the land of lumber and copper mines. This was one of the richest sections of Uncle Sam's great domain.

Arrived in Marquette, Young wasted no time.

He found his launch intact, and the party went aboard it. It was a small craft and required only a small crew.



"As long as you fellows are with me, I'll hire no crew," he said. "Do either of you know anything about an engine?"

"I do," replied Old King Brady. "I can run the boat all right."

"Good! Then I'll place her in your hands," said Young with delight. "The boss made a good bargain when he enlisted you chaps."

"Don't be too sure," said Harry, with a laugh. "You don't know us very well yet."

"You're all right," declared Young. "You suit me."

The bunkers of the little craft were filled with coal.

Provisions enough for the cruise were already on board; so the start was made.

The sail across Lake Superior was no light matter. The little launch was stiff and seaworthy, but the wind blew hard from the north, and made progress slow.

At night the Bradys slept in the small forward cabin, each taking a turn at the engine and the steering gear, which was so arranged that one man could do both.

Young made his quarters in the cabin amidships.

In due time, however, by holding to their course they came in sight of the Canadian shore.

Young was out on deck with his glass, and scanned the distant land.

"There are the Umbagog Islands," he declared. "Set your course for them, lads."

"Will the gang be there?" asked Old King Brady.

"Oh no!" replied the wary Young. "They are inland. We will hang around the islands until we can get word to them."

"Then some of them will be apt to see us?"

"That is it. You see, the islands are not the regular rendezvous. That is far in the interior. I'll take you up there after we get ashore."

The Bradys were now arrived at a critical stage of the game.

They hardly knew just what to do.

But for the certainty that the bogus message would expose them, they would have gladly seized the opportunity to affiliate with the gang.

But the very first meeting of Young with Blaney would certainly betray them.

This would never do.

Yet they had not gained the end which they desired.

They had not as yet gained a certain knowledge of the exact location of the gang.

They had gained no more than others had before them, and those others had been baffled.

So altogether the Bradys were in by no means a satisfied frame of mind; yet it would never do to let Young go ashore or leave them.

Every possible artifice was used to gain from him an exact knowledge of the outlaws' hiding place.

What his reason was they could not guess, but he would not tell them.

"I'll take you there when we go ashore," he said. "I can't tell you so that you would know."

Of course the detectives did not dare to carry the inquisition too far.

They were obliged to assume an air of careless indifference. This very fact thwarted them.

It was dark when the Alice, which was the name of the launch, hove to under the lee of one of the islands.

The anchor was put out.

Then the evening meal was prepared.

"The signal is a red and blue light," said Young, bringing a colored lantern out of the cabin. "We will put it out and perhaps we'll hear from them before morning. If not, we'll drop down to Copper Creek to-morrow."

"Where is that?" asked Harry, with affected carelessness.

"Oh, down the coast a ways. Now I'm going to turn in. If you get a hail from the shore call me."

"All right," agreed the detectives.

And Young turned in and was soon fast asleep.

The detectives sat down in the pit of the little engine room to discuss the situation.

"It looks rather dubious for us," said Harry. "If we stay here we will surely be visited by a delegation of the gang."

"That is sure."

"That lantern may bring some of them out here to-night."

Old King Brady reached over and closed the lantern slide.

"That stops it," he said. "We can't afford to take any of those kind of chances. I see no other way but to spring the trap on Young right here."

"Yes; but so far as gaining anything goes we might just as well have done that in Chicago."

"That is true."

"And if we arrest him—what are we going to do with him?"

"We would have to take him to Marquette."

Neither of the detectives liked the outlook. Their plans had not worked at all as they hoped.

They had believed that there would be little difficulty in getting possession of facts which would enable them to spring a surprise on the gang at an early moment.

But the curious reticence of Young had foiled them.

Sometimes I think the best thing we can do is to cut loose right here," said Old King Brady. "Leave the yacht and Young, and plunge right into the wilderness."

"Why not keep hold of Young? It will be one bird secured."

"We will have to take him to Marquette."

"Yes; but then——"

The sentence was never finished. Before the Bradys could decide upon a plan of action a startling thing occurred.



From the gloom of the lake's placid surface came the dip of paddles and a gruff voice:

"Where's your signal? It's the Alice, all right."

## CHAPTER IV.

### WORKING FOR POINTS.

For one moment the detectives were almost like men petrified. Startling, indeed, was the realization which had come upon them.

The signal, briefly as it had been exposed, had been seen.

The outlaws had come out from the shore to visit the launch.

The Bradys were trapped.

For a moment desperate expedients suggested themselves to the two detectives; but only for a moment.

The next instant a rowboat shot up alongside the launch, and a half dozen bearded, rough-looking villains sprang onto her deck.

A sudden thought came to Old King Brady.

It might be that their leader, Blaney, was not with this party. In that case they were temporarily safe.

A wolfish-looking fellow sprang into the engine room and glared at the two detectives.

"Who are you?" he roared, with an oath.

"We are the crew of this boat," replied Harry, quietly. "My name is Harlow, and this man's name is Smith. Now, who are you?"

"Eh?" grunted the villain. "You're a greenhorn about heres I take it. Everybody from Manitoba to Port Huron knows me. I'm Dave Hibbard."

"Never heard of you before," said Harry, coolly. "What do yau want?"

"Ain't this the Alice?"

"That's the name of this craft."

"Who's on board?"

"We've brought Mr. Young from Marquette."

At this Hibbard leered at the detectives.

"Do you know where you are, and what you've come to?" he asked. "No man can carry tales out of this country. There's no going back for you."

"That's all right," said Old King Brady. "We're under orders."

Hibbard's eyes opened wide.

"Is that so?" he said, slowly. "Recuits, eh? I'll see Young about it."

"Here he is," cried that worthy himself, leaping down into the pit. "Dave, here's two able men that the boss picked up in Chicago. I've got his letter of recommendation here."

The Bradys breathed easier.

Things were coming their way.

Blaney was not present.

The forgery of the message would not be detected at once. There was yet a chance for them.

At this they grew bolder, and began to seek affiliation with Hibbard. The detectives played their hands well.

Finally the crook, Young, turned and asked:

"Where is Blaney?"

"He is up at Copper Creek."

"Ah, has there been trouble up there?"

"You bet! That young cub of a Weldon Smith, who is trying to rescue his sweetheart, got into camp the other night and shot two men, and then got away."

Young whistled shrilly.

"The deuce you say! And aren't any of you fellows smart enough to catch him?"

"He is like a weasel."

"Well, that is not so very bad. He didn't rescue the girl?"

"Oh, no; but, you see, now we've got to break camp there. The vigilants will be hot after us. We've got to get out of Copper Creek."

"That's bad. Why didn't somebody kill the young cub?"

"He's slippery, I tell you."

The detectives heard all this with interest.

They remembered that Weldon Smith was the young lover of Alice Maynard, who had remained in the woods under oath to rescue her or exterminate the Canada gang.

Certainly his first stroke had been a fierce one.

He had killed two of the outlaws, and compelled them to break camp. Mentally the Bradys reflected that they would like to meet that young man.

Hibbard and Young now retired and engaged in a lengthy consultation.

Then the outlaws took their leave.

After they had gone Young came to the engine pit and said:

"We'll turn in and have some sleep now. To-morrow we'll run down to Black Point, just below here, and I think I can find Blaney down there. He may have some work for you."

With this he retired to his cabin. The detectives felt much relieved and even elated.

The outlook had changed.

Old King Brady had been doing some thinking. He was now ready to elaborate a plan of action.

The scheme was most certainly a daring one.

Harry thrilled with excitement as he listened to it.

"We will wait until our friend Richard Young is asleep," said the old detective, "then we will step in to his state-room and gag and bind him."

"Make a prisoner of him?"

"Yes."

"And then——"

"Then we will confine him in the forward cabin. To-morrow we will run the yacht slowly along the shore until we reach Black Point."

"But how will we know what place that is?"



"I think I can locate it from the description given me by Young. We will anchor there and put out the signal for the gang."

"Whew! Won't that be risky?"

"Of course. They will come out to the yacht. We will then give them a message from Young to Blaney, telling him to come aboard the Alice and meet him at the island on very important business."

"A decoy?"

"Just so."

"Whew! If it works——"

"It will work."

"I believe it will. If we can get Blaney on board the yacht the game is ours."

"Indeed it is."

The detectives spent some time in fully elaborating this scheme.

"We will have the ringleaders," said Harry; "but how about the prisoners?"

Old King Brady smiled grimly.

"They will be bound to obey a message from Blaney," he said. "We can return here with orders from him to place the prisoners aboard this yacht. Then we can sail away in triumph. Without Blaney and Young the Canada gang will go to pieces."

Harry was delighted.

It looked like a sure thing. He could not see the possibility of failure.

"They can't beat us," he declared. "We will win the case."

"I hope so."

The detectives prepared for action. They waited their chance, and were soon assured that Young was asleep.

Then they slipped silently into his cabin. In an instant Harry pinioned his arms, while Old King Brady bound him.

Young awoke with astonishment and fury.

"Help! What are you doing? What's all this?" he roared. "Hey, you imps of Satan, let go of me! I don't feel like being made a fool of!"

"Be still, you scoundrel, or we'll tie your mouth up," said Old King Brady, sternly.

Something like a realization of the truth began to dawn upon the dazed villain.

"Eh? What's this?" he spluttered, fiercely. "You dare to lay hand on me, Harlow? Curses! I believe it is foul treachery! Who are you?"

"You will find out in due time," said Old King Brady in a voice of steel. "Now I want you to keep quiet or it will be the worse for you."

Bound and helpless, Young was bound to subside.

He lay on his back glaring fiercely at the detectives in the dim light. He was plainly puzzled.

"By thunder!" he finally gasped. "To think that I should be so easily fooled! You played your cards well! I know you now. You are the Bradys. You fooled me in good shape."

"Well," said Old King Brady, "it is true that we have the upper hand just now; but I advise you to keep quiet."

"What are you going to do with me?" asked the crook.

"At present I am going to leave you right here. If you make too much racket we will dump you overboard."

The villain grinned.

"Cunning, aren't you?" he said, with a sneer; "but I guess you don't know what you're up against. You can never get away from here. Our men are everywhere, and we have faster boats than this one."

"We shall see," said Old King Brady, grimly.

With this the two detectives cast themselves down beside their prisoner to get some much needed rest.

Before daybreak, however, they were astir, and had slipped their anchor and let the Alice slowly make her way down through the narrows.

When day broke they were some miles from their stopping place of the night before.

They now kept a lookout for the point of land known as Black Point.

Old King Brady devised a written message, which read as follows:

"Dear Blaney: For certain reasons, which I will explain later, I remain on this island. I have the stuff all safe here, and I send the Alice down by two boatmen to bring you up here. Come alone and keep dark. There are hounds of the law after us. Yours, Dick Young."

Both detectives knew that there was plenty of possibility of the failure of their game.

Blaney might distrust the message or its import, and come out with a number of the gang to investigate.

If, however, he fell into the trap easily, as they hoped, the detectives could congratulate themselves.

They finally came to a long jutting point of ledge which made far out into the lake.

That this was Black Point they felt satisfied.

They hove to in a little bay, and set out the signals.

Hours passed and there was no sign of life on the shore.

It was as much an unbroken wilderness as in the days when the savages roamed its fastnesses.

But just as the sun began to decline in the west Old King Brady, who was on deck, cried excitedly:

"Here they come, Harry. Now for the game."

## CHAPTER V.

### DEFEAT.

A boat containing four armed men shot out from a little bay in the shore line.

These men were of ruffianly type, wearing slouch hats and red shirts of flannel, after the manner of the woodcutters of the North.



They carried a signal flag in the bow of the boat. It was similar to the one on board the Alice. Straight for the little yacht they rapidly rowed. Not until within hailing distance did they rest on their oars.

Then one of their number called:

"Hello! Hello!"

"Hello!" answered Old King Brady.

"Is that the Alice?"

"Yes."

"Who's aboard?"

"Tom Smith and Jack Harlow."

"We don't know ye."

"We have a message from Dick Young for Blaney."

The rowboat at once drew nearer to the yacht.

The spokesman, a burly fellow with a beard, stood up in the bow and looked curiously at the detectives.

Soon the boat was alongside.

The fellow jumped aboard.

Old King Brady met him.

"Where are the others?" asked the fellow sharply.

"Whom do you mean?" asked Old King Brady, with affected surprise.

"Are you the only two jays aboard this 'ere boat?"

"Not at present. You are here," replied the detective, coolly.

"Oh, don't be funny! Where is Young?" asked the fellow testily.

"He is back on the island."

"What did ye come down here after?"

"We have a message for Blaney, and you want to deliver it quick. We are to wait for an answer."

The fellow's manner changed.

"Oh, that's it, eh?" he exclaimed. "All right, boss! We'll take it right over to him."

"When may we expect an answer?" asked Old King Brady. "Young is in a mighty hurry."

"Kain't say," replied the outlaw; "but I'll deliver it to Blaney within an hour. I say, ye're new men in the gang, ain't ye? When did ye jine?"

"Young brought us up from Chicago with him. He has been in the same line with us for a long time."

"Oh, that's it. Wal, I'll bring ye an answer as soon as I kin. Come ashore some time an' we'll break ye into the ways of the gang."

Old King Brady affected delight.

"That's jest what we want to do," he said. "You'll hear from us before long."

"I hope so. Good-day."

"Good-day. My name is Harlow."

"An' mine is Pete Humphries."

The four boatmen rowed away to the shore.

The detectives dodged into the cabin and shook hands with delight.

"If Blaney only takes the bait."

"It looks a sure thing."

"Yes."

"We'll have the game."

"For a sure thing."

On the strength of this Old King Brady cooked up an appetizing meal, and the detectives opened a bottle of wine.

All this while in an inner cabin the villain, Young, closely gagged and bound, had helplessly listened to all.

Old King Brady now carried him in some food and loosened the gag.

"Well, my friend," said the old detective, smilingly, "we hope to have the pleasure of presenting your partner, Blaney, to you very shortly."

"Curse you!" gritted the villain, with choleric fury. "I'll get even with you for this if it takes a thousand years."

"I hardly think we'll any of us be here in fifty years from now," said the old detective, with grim humor; "but I pray you, be calm."

This, however, only made Young the more furious.

But his wrath was futile. He was completely helpless.

However, he was not so angry as to have wholly lost his appetite.

He devoured the food brought him by the detectives in ravenous fashion.

Darkness soon settled down over the water.

The detectives set the signal lantern, and kept a careful watch of the shore.

And so it happened that presently they detected a glimmer of light far away toward the point.

Then the signal light was seen.

A boat was coming out again to the yacht.

Once more Young was gagged. This time the detectives decided that it was safer to put him in the little hold forward.

If a search of the yacht was by any means made, they would hardly look for anyone in this place.

The Bradys now went on deck and waited for the boat.

Soon the splash of the oars could be heard, and then it came swiftly alongside.

"Hello, Harlow!" shouted a voice, which Old King Brady knew to be that of Humphries.

"Hello, Pete!" returned the old detective, familiarly. "Make fast and come aboard."

The rowboat was now against the yacht, and Humphries sprang aboard.

The yacht's lantern showed three other rowers and a man with muffled face in the stern.

This man now stood up.

"All right, Humphries?" he asked, in an authoritative voice.

"All right, boss."

Then the man in the cloak stepped over the rail. He lifted the drooping brim of his hat and showed hard set features to the detectives.

"Ah, my hearties," he said, bluffly, "Young sent ye down here after me, did he?"

"Aye, sir," replied Old King Brady.



"He is at the island?"

"Yes."

"Why the devil didn't he come down here also?" asked the leader of the Canada gang, with a tinge of curiosity.

Old King Brady bowed.

"Ye must ask him that," he said. "We are under orders."

Blaney seemed satisfied.

"All right," he said. "Take a look over the boat, Pete, and see if everything is all right."

Blaney stood by the rail and continued to ply Old King Brady with questions.

But Harry went with Humphries, and they stopped long enough in the cabin to open a bottle of brandy.

When they returned to the deck, Humphries bowed and said:

"Everything is ship-shape on board, sir."

"Very well," replied Blaney, lightly. "Cast off and go back to camp. See that you keep all secure there until I return."

"All right, sir."

The boat cast off, and was rowed away into the darkness.

Old King Brady sprang into the engine pit and began to get up steam.

Blaney paced the deck.

"Get a move on," he finally growled. "This is a queer wrinkle of Dick's, anyway. I must be back here in the morning."

"We'll do the trick, sir," cried Old King Brady. "Have no fear of that."

Soon the Alice was speeding away along shore.

Harry came up out of the cabin, and said obsequiously:

"Your stateroom is all ready, sir, if you wish to retire."

Blaney bowed and walked into the cabin.

The time for action had come.

The detectives were ready.

Harry stepped silently up behind the outlaw and threw his arms about him. Old King Brady appeared in front and held a pistol muzzle against Blaney's skull.

"You are a prisoner," said the detective in a voice of steel. "Make the slightest move and you die."

The face of the outlaw was gray and ghastly.

A gurgling cry escaped his lips.

"Devils! It is a cursed trap," he cried. "Hands off! I'll have you flayed alive for this."

"Not this time," said Old King Brady, grimly.

The outlaw leader struggled fiercely; but the odds were too great, and he was overcome and handcuffs slipped onto his wrists.

He was a prisoner.

He was left in the cabin bound hand and foot. The detectives were exultant. Success had rewarded their efforts.

They went out on deck.

"Whew!" exclaimed Harry. "He made a good tussle. He is strong; but now what is the move?"

"Our proper plan is to go to Marquette and jail the birds."

"That will take time."

"True enough; but I see no other way."

"It is a pity that we have no safe place about here to secrete the prisoners. We might go back and work this game on Pete Humphries for the delivery of the prisoners."

Old King Brady knit his brows.

He realized that the young detective was right. It was a golden opportunity. With delay it might be lost.

But how could it be accomplished?"

That was the question.

It would take time to return from Marquette.

By that time the gang would be almost sure to have discovered the trick.

Then all would be up.

For a long time Old King Brady pondered the matter.

Finally his face lit up.

"It can be done," he cried.

"Ah, you have a plan?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

The old detective produced his inevitable plug of tobacco.

He slowly bit off a piece.

"Well," he said, finally, "there are any number of these islands hereabouts. I don't see why we can't hide these rascals somewhere in some cave or out-of-the-way place."

"We can return for them later. Securely handcuffed and bound they cannot easily escape."

"Of course we can," agreed Harry. "I am in favor of it."

The Alice was now steamed ahead faster. A moon came up and made the waters bright and clear.

Soon the little cluster of island was reached.

There was little chance to carry out their project that night, however.

## CHAPTER VI.

### IN THE POWER OF THE ENEMY.

Morning dawned bright and clear. The detectives ran the little launch into a small bay.

Then they anchored her and went ashore on one of the islands.

There seemed little danger incurred in this, for the place was wild and apparently deserted.

The prisoners were safely locked in the cabin.

The detectives did not intend to go far out of sight. They made all these arrangements and went ashore.

The island was rocky and for vegetation had only a number of larch and spruce trees, and thick beds of moss.



The detectives took care to make careful quest for a covert or place of hiding.

Their efforts were finally rewarded with success.

A capital niche in the ledge was found where the prisoners could be left safely and concealed from view by means of a heavy slab of rock.

"This is the proper place," declared Old King Brady. "Let us go back and get them, Harry."

"All right."

The detectives started back for the yacht.

They slid down the great ledges to the shore; but as they came in sight of the launch both paused in dismay and horror.

Too late they repented having left the Alice unguarded.

Around a small headland a rowboat had shot into view.

It contained six armed men. That they were of the Canada gang there was no doubt.

Moreover they were rowing straight for the launch.

"My soul!" gasped Harry. "The game is up, partner."

Old King Brady's inscrutable features never relaxed a muscle.

"We must beat them," he said grimly.

"We can't do it."

"There is no such word. Get into the boat lively."

Harry needed no second bidding.

He leaped into the boat and Old King Brady pushed off. The two Bradys bent to the oars.

A yell went up from the outlaws.

They headed directly for the launch to cut the detectives off.

"Pull, Harry," gritted Old King Brady. "Keep the launch between us."

A couple of bullets came skipping over the water.

But the Bradys did not heed these.

They managed to keep the hull of the launch between them and the outlaws.

There was not the slightest possibility that these villains were coming knowingly to the rescue of their two ringleaders.

It was only a small gang of the villains out looking for prey.

To them the launch looked to be such.

Never in their lives had the detectives pulled as hard.

Nearer they drew to the launch; but the six outlaws had gained on them.

Old King Brady knew what it meant to give up the launch and the two prisoners.

"We must get there if we have to fight for it!" he gritted.

And now the boat was within a few lengths of the Alice. They ceased rowing and Old King Brady sprang upon the boat's thwarts.

But he saw defeat.

They were just too late.

The six outlaws were swarming aboard on the other side. In a moment the Bradys were covered with gleaming revolvers.

Retreat was out of the question.

They were prisoners.

Rude hands dragged them onto the yacht's deck. A fierce, bewhiskered fellow led the gang.

"Haw, haw, haw!" he roared. "Ye thought ye could slip us, my beauties! Well, I tell ye, Hank Taylor is a hard one ter beat."

Old King Brady tried bluff.

"What do you mean by this work?" he demanded. "It is an outrage. You shall pay for this when the government cutter comes up."

At this the outlaws roared.

"Oh, we're not so easy!" jeered Taylor. "You can't fool us. Tie 'em up, boys."

The Bradys were bound hand and foot.

"Whar's the rest of yer crew?" asked Taylor. "Yew ain't all, are ye?"

"Find them if you can," said Harry, who was desperate, for it was galling to be thus defeated when the game was right in hand.

"Oh, don't git sassy!" said the big woodsman sourly. "Who are ye, and what are ye doin' in these waters?"

"That's for you to find out."

"Is that so? Well, my young cub, that's jest what we're goin' to do. Overhaul the craft, boys. Durned if she don't look like our boat from Marquette. An' the name is the same, too."

The crisis had come.

The Bradys saw that all was up. In another moment the villains had burst into the cabin.

And there they found the two prisoners. The effect of this upon them was most startling.

Excited cries went up.

The gags were removed and the bonds cut.

The two ringleaders burst out upon the deck exultant and furious with rage and triumph.

"Ha, ha! You see the tables have turned," yelled Blaney, with ferocious oaths. "I told you it would be so. No one can come into this country and capture us. Now we've got you. Oh, there'll be no escape for you."

"They are cunning devils," cried Young, wild with joy. "I thought they'd got the best of us, Bill."

"It don't look so now."

"Well, I reckon not."

"It will be fun for us to put these two sharp hounds where they can do no more harm. I say, Brady, what brought you here, anyway?"

Old King Brady smiled grimly.

"You!" he said, imperturbably. "And I shall see you hanged."

"Whew! that looks likely. What is going to save you?"

"My good luck."

"This is the time it fails ye; but you've got grit. I say, didn't the widow Maynard send you up here to look for her children?"

"That was one object I had in view," replied Old King Brady.



"Well, you didn't succeed, did you?"

"I am not through yet."

"Do you imagine we'll let you go out of this region alive?"

"Yes."

"You do?"

"Certainly."

"Well, you needn't fool yourself. You've followed your last trail, Old King Brady. I can tell you that."

"Perhaps so."

"If the widow wants her son and daughter let her pay a good ransom for them. She can get them all right in that way."

"Then they are safe?" asked Old King Brady.

"Safe with us," replied Young, with an oath. "On my word, Blaney, I never was so completely fooled in my life. They came to me at the Palmer House with a message from you."

"I sent you no message."

"Of course you didn't. No more than I sent the message to you which got you on board this boat. What luck that Hank Taylor should happen along."

"Well, I should say; but what will we do with these fellows?"

"Hang 'em!" growled Young. "The sooner they're out of the world the better it will be for us."

"Well, really, I do believe you," agreed Blaney. "I suggest, however, that we take them down to Black Point and hang them there."

"I'm agreeable."

The Bradys heard this talk, and realized full well the desperate nature of the scrape they were in.

But it was by no means the first time they had faced death.

So they were not the least bit afraid. In fact hope had not as yet deserted them.

The yacht was turned about and headed for Black Point.

In due time that headland came into view. Then the yacht shot into a little passage in the cliff.

Threading this a short distance the craft came out into a wide lake, which was connected with Superior by this narrow channel.

This lake or basin of water was surrounded by a great forest.

The Alice turned along the eastern shore, and now a glade among the trees was seen.

Here was the camp of the outlaws.

A number of rude cabins of logs and houses of bark comprised the outlaw camp.

A more secure hiding place could hardly be imagined.

In fact, had the sharpest eyes discovered the entrance to the stronghold of the outlaws, it would have been impossible to surprise them, for sentries were posted at all points along the shore.

Also in case of an attack the defence could be made against a mighty force.

As the Bradys saw all this, they realized how hopeless was their case.

Prisoners in the hands of these desperate men, the chances were one hundred to one against their escape.

But yet they did not give way to despair. They were cool and calm, and carefully counted their chances.

The appearance of the Alice in the lake caused some excitement.

A number of the gang gathered at the shore and waited for explanations.

The Bradys were placed in a small boat and rowed ashore.

"I tell ye, boys, we've got a big haul!" cried Young, exultantly. "Who do you think these chaps are?"

Lowering glances were bestowed upon the detectives.

In all their lives they had never seen such a tough-looking gang of cutthroats and desperadoes.

"They are the Bradys from New York," cried Blaney. "You have all heard of 'em. Oh, we've got the foxes in a trap this time."

A great yell of fierce exultation and delight went up.

The capture of the two famous detectives was a matter of great triumph to the Canada gang.

## CHAPTER VII.

### AN UNEXPECTED RESCUE.

Not a few in that gang had reason to feel good over the capture of the two Bradys.

They had stood in fear of a return to civilization on account of these clever sleuth-hounds of justice.

The Bradys were taken to a cabin and unceremoniously thrust within.

Bound securely, their chance for escape was slight.

Guards paced before the door.

The gang withdrew, and the detectives were left alone.

They realized what their position was fully.

Without rescue or an escape they would never hope to see home and friends again.

Death would be certain.

"One of us ought to have remained on board the Alice," said Harry. "It is too bad."

"That is true," agreed Old King Brady; "but it is too late to regret that now."

"True enough. We cannot give up the game yet, though. Is there no way for us to escape?"

"I have been trying my bonds. I can loosen my left hand."

"Good! Roll over this way and I will assist you."

The detectives' hands were bound behind them with stout cord.

By rolling over and over, Old King Brady managed to place himself beside Harry.

Then back to back they worked on the tight knots.



Harry's fingers were slender, and he managed finally to pull out one of the knots.

This loosened the cords, and the old detective was almost able to free his hands.

But just at this moment footsteps were heard outside.

Then the door opened.

The detectives lay quite still, and looked up to see the exultant face of Blaney.

"Well, my fine birds," jeered the ruffian, "how do you like the situation? That was a clever trick of yours—getting us all down to the island; but it didn't work, did it?"

"You win this time," said Old King Brady, quietly; "but your career is not without a limit."

"Bah! I can defy all the law in this country."

"Do not boast."

"That is the truth. Uncle Sam would have to send his standing army to rout us out of here; and if he succeeded, we could go further north into greater fastnesses."

"You are very confident."

"Why not? They will never fool me as they did poor Louis Riel. I tell you, the people of this region are getting to have their freedom."

The two detectives regarded this statement with surprise.

That Blaney should pose as a patriot was, indeed, an unexpected and astonishing turn.

"That is a very good cloak for you to hide under," said Old King Brady; "but it does not deceive me."

Blaney smiled in a cold, sneering way.

"I am not anxious to deceive you," he said. "Your time is near its end. To-morrow you will be disposed of. The world will know the two Bradys no more."

"We know what to expect."

"So you do. Until to-morrow, then, I will leave you to think it over."

The villain showed his teeth in a fiendish grin.

Then he turned to the door, and said, tauntingly:

"Au revoir, my fine detectives. You thought you were going to dispose of the Canada gang, didn't you? But you met your fate, and that is death."

The door closed behind him.

The detectives waited until they were sure he was out of hearing.

Then Harry said:

"We may fool him yet, partner."

"Perhaps so."

"I believe I can untie that knot and give you the use of your hands."

"That will be a great step if you can," said Old King Brady.

"Let me try it again."

So the detectives resumed their work on the cords. Harry exhausted his patience on the obdurate knot, and, finally, just when he was about to give up in despair, it yielded.

He gave a cry of joy.

Old King Brady painfully drew his wrists out of the coil of rope.

They were sore and bleeding, and it was some moments before he was able to use his fingers.

But finally the strength came back to the weakened cords, and he at once began work on the thongs which bound his ankles.

In a few moments he had them also free.

Next he turned his attention to Harry.

The young detective's wrist pained him greatly, for the cords were tight and gave him great distress.

But in a few moments Old King Brady had freed them.

Harry then freed his ankles, and both detectives felt that they had taken the first step toward escape.

But they knew that the next step would be one of peril.

There were armed guards outside the cabin.

They crept to the door and looked out between the crevices.

Night had fallen, and a pitchy darkness was over the country.

Lights gleamed from the outlaws' cabins, and ribald laughter and rollicking songs could be heard.

The guard sat on a stump about twenty feet from the door.

His back was turned, his rifle lay across his knee, and he was looking off toward the lake.

Apparently he was in a reverie, or listening to the songs of his comrades.

The Bradys took all this in with keen and critical eye. They weighed their chances carefully.

Then Old King Brady whispered:

"It looks favorable, Harry."

"Do you think we can do it?"

"Yes."

"There is only one guard on this side of the cabin."

"That is all."

"If we could get up behind him in silence we should be able to fix him all right."

"Yes."

"How is the door?"

This was the apparent obstacle.

The door was securely fastened by means of a heavy bar on the outside.

There was no way in the power of the detectives to lift this.

For a moment it looked as if their plans would be frustrated.

Then a startling incident for a time arrested their attention:

They saw a dark figure glide lithe and sinuously from the shadows of the pines.

Like a crouching panther it crept up to the corner of the cabin.

Then it made its way silently up behind the sentry.

Nearer that dark figure crept, and the detectives watched in spellbound silence.

What did it mean?



This was the question which came to them.

Before they could venture even a guess, the dark figure gave a cat-like leap, and was upon the sentry. One sinewy arm was thrown snake-line around his neck.

A hand gripped his throat, and the outcry was stifled.

There was a short, sharp struggle in the dark.

It was one-sided.

The sentry soon lay silent on the ground.

Then the unknown assailant arose and listened. Apparently satisfied, he glided up to the cabin door.

"He is coming in here," whispered Harry. "What does it mean?"

"Don't you see? It is a rescue," said the old detective in thrilling tones.

The bar was lifted, and the door swung in. The unknown assailant of the sentry glided into the cabin.

He saw the detectives and made a silent gesture.

Not a word was spoken.

Out of the cabin all three went. A moment later they were in the dark recesses of the pines.

Then the unknown rescuer whispered:

"I saw you come in as prisoners. The opportunity was good to rescue you, and I embraced it. Are you detectives?"

"That is what we are," said Old King Brady; "but who are you?"

"I am one of a yachting party which the villains captured some months ago. Two of our party are yet in the power of these scoundrels, and I mean to effect their rescue."

"Ah!" exclaimed Harry. "Are you Weldon Smith?"

"That is my name," said their rescuer, in surprise; "but how did you know it?"

"We are in this region for the same purpose as yourself. We want to rescue Miss Maynard and her brother, and also capture these villains who are the leaders of the gang."

Smith was much surprised.

"Who sent you here?" he asked.

"The Secret Service. Our name is Brady. We are from New York."

"Oh, then you are the two famous detectives whom everybody has heard of," cried Smith, in surprise and delight. "Indeed, I am glad to know that I am to have your assistance. I shall now feel sure of success."

"You do us too much honor," said Old King Brady. "We came here, and at once distinguished ourselves by falling into the hands of the enemy."

"I am sure it must have been an unforeseen accident."

"Not by any means. It was our own want of forethought," said Harry, candidly. "We had both Young and Blaney in chancery, and the case would have been won if we had not been so careless."

And the detectives recited their adventures to young Smith, who was a youth of more than ordinary parts, as he had already demonstrated.

Then Smith gave an account of his own experiences, to which the detectives listened with interest.

They were much taken with the youth, and at once all three agreed to work together.

"I have located several hiding places of the gang," said Smith. "This, however, is the place from which they send forth their piratical expeditions along the lake."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### AT MOON LAKE.

"In that case," said Old King Brady, "I wonder that you have not sought the settlements for a posse of men to round up the gang."

Smith shook his head.

"I have not dared to do that," he said.

"Why?"

"A good reason. They would kill their prisoners before we could rescue them."

"Do you believe that?"

"I do."

"Then your game is to effect their rescue before bringing the officers of the law down upon them?"

"Yes."

The detectives were thoughtful.

"You may be right," said Harry; "but it is slow work. You can only use strategy."

"That is all. I am looking for a chance. If they would give me the same opportunity I had to rescue you, I would be all right."

"Do you know where they keep the prisoners?"

"No; that is what baffles me. I cannot find their hiding place."

"Ah, I see!" exclaimed Old King Brady. "I am inclined to agree with you, Smith, that your game is the best."

"I had thought so."

"We must first rescue the prisoners by strategy or otherwise."

"Just so. The rest will be easy," said Smith.

"What is the nearest settlement?"

"Oh, fully a hundred miles from here; but I should never think of going there. My plan would be to enlist the lumbermen of Eagle Lake Camp."

"The lumbermen?"

"Yes. Forty miles above here is a big lumber camp. Three hundred men are working on the greatest timber tract in this country."

"But usually lumbermen are lawless themselves."

"Not the Eagle Camp men. The outlaws have made war on them, and robbed and killed so many of their number that they only need the word to wipe the Canada gang out of existence."

Before the Bradys could make further comment a startling sound reached their ears.

Loud shouts of baffled rage came from the camp of the outlaws.



"The escape is discovered," said Smith; "but we are safe. They can never catch us in this darkness."

They quickened their footsteps, however, and plunged deeper into the wilds.

Some hours later they reached the base of a rocky hill.

Here, in a crevice of the ledges, Smith raked up the embers of a fire, and said:

"This was my comp. We are safe here for the present. Let us have some sleep."

The suggestion was a good one.

The detectives were glad to embrace it, and easting themselves upon the mossy ground they were soon fast asleep.

When they awoke it was daylight, and the sun was shining in their faces.

Smith was broiling a rabbit over the hot coals.

"I have lived on game for many weeks now," he declared. "There is plenty of it in this region."

After partaking of a frugal breakfast the three now discussed plans of operation.

"We are up against a hundred," said Smith. "Of course we can only hope to win by means of strategy."

"That is true," said Old King Brady.

"Now I am of the opinion that Aliee and Hugh are imprisoned somewhere up in the Moon Lake region."

"Where may that be?"

"It is the next lake in the chain beyond Eagle Lake."

"Why not go up there?"

"That was my plan when you appeared on the scene."

"Good!" said Harry. "Why not all go up there?"

"I think it is a good plan. I am of the opinion that Blaney and Young are going thither at once."

"Perhaps, then, it would be well for us to preeede them?"

"Then you agree with me?"

"Yes."

"Very good," said Smith. "Let us start at once."

It did not take the trio long to make ready for the journey, which bid fair to be an arduous one.

"It is a rough region," said Smith. "I have been there once; but failed to locate the outlaws' den."

"We ought to be able to do it this time."

"Oh, yes, I think so. I shall have your co-operation."

Smith, as the detectives now saw him in daylight, looked as little like a youth of the mode as one could imagine.

When he had first come into the region he had worn a yachting suit, and clothes of expensive material.

But he soon found that these would hardly last a long while, and he had exchanged them at Eagle Camp for the red shirt, jean trousers, boots and slouch hat of a lumberman.

This, in part, also made for him a perfect disguise.

The detectives followed Smith's guidanee, as he was, of course, more familiar with the country.

Leaving their camp, they struck out through the woods to the west.

After traveling an hour or so through the roughest region the Bradys thought they had ever seen, they came to a small water course in the woods.

The detectives fortunately wore top boots, so they were able to wade the stream.

"Now," said Smith, "we must follow this rivulet to its confluence with Shingle Creek. There I have in hiding a birch canoe, in which we can make our way down the creek to the Roaring River. That will lead us into Moon Lake."

For miles they followed the brook, until finally they came to a green intervale in the woods.

Here the creek flowed sluggishly between sandy banks. Smith produced a bark canoe from the bushes.

The detectives were surprised.

"I will say," said Old King Brady, "that you familiarized yourself with this region very readily, Mr. Smith."

The young Chicagoan nodded.

"Yes," he said, "I think I did; but it was a case of necessity. People can adapt themselves to almost anything if they choose."

"That is true," said Old King Brady; "but may I ask how you happened to know that this canoe was here?"

"Very simple matter, indeed. You know I trailed the gang to this region once before?"

"Yes."

"Well, on my return I managed to secure one of their canoes. I came up the river and creek as far as this point."

"Oh, I understand."

"So, you see, I am fortunate in having done that, for I can assure you that it would have been a long journey to Moon Lake overland."

"Well, we are very glad to have the journey made easy."

"Very good! Now, gentlemen, if you choose, we will embark."

"We are ready."

"But I would like to ask another question?"

"Well?"

"Are you armed?"

"No. The outlaws took our weapons when we were captured on the launch."

Smith turned and plunged his arm into a cervice under a huge boulder.

He drew out a cartridge belt.

Next he produced a rifle, and later another.

"I also managed to abstract these from the outlaws' camp," he said. "I had hidden them here for a future emergency."

"By jove!" cried Harry, with delight, "you are a jewel, Smith. We have struck luck!"

"Well, I should say so," agreed Old King Brady. "It looks as if we might be able to do something."

"It is as well to be armed," said the modest young Chicagoan. "I have pistols, so I will let you gentlemen have the rifles."

"We will try and make good use of them," said Old King Brady.

"You will no doubt have the opportunity."

The Bradys took the rifles and loaded them.



Then all three stepped into the canoe and paddled away down the creek.

For miles they kept on down the current through a country of rare wilderness and natural beauty.

In due time they reached the confluence of the little creek with the Roaring River.

Here the conditions changed.

They came now to a fiercely rushing stream, with rapids and cataracts.

They were in momentary danger of being swamped at any turn, and at times were obliged to carry the canoe a long distance.

Down this river, however, they traveled with great speed.

The next afternoon they came to dead water, and then the placid waters of Moon Lake were spread to their view.

As they entered upon its waters, Smith steered the canoe along the western shore.

"It is just as well to keep out of sight," he said. "We might be spotted by some of the gang."

"That is right," agreed Old King Brady.

"Have you any idea where their stronghold is?" asked Harry.

"Not the slightest," said Smith. "I made search for it once before up here; but this time, with your assistance, I think we will find it."

Then he pointed with his paddle to the upper end of the lake.

"There is a curious island up there," he said. "It is a solid piece of ledge, with walls jutting down into the water from a height of forty or fifty feet. I would not be surprised if the outlaws had their den on that island. One thing is sure, only artillery could dislodge them from it."

"That is the place," said Old King Brady, with conviction.

"Shall we take a look at it?"

"Yes."

"Then I think we had better go ashore," said Smith.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE ISLAND STRONGHOLD.

And he suited the action to the word.

The canoe was beached and the Bradys leaped out.

"You see," said Smith, "if we remained on the water we would surely be seen."

"That is right."

"Moreover, this lake takes its name from the fact that it is crescent shaped, like a new moon. Now, by taking a cut through the woods here we come out to the other tip of the horn, and save time and distance."

"Which is very important."

"I think so."

It was late in the afternoon.

Darkness would soon shut down over the landscape.

The three rescuers plodded on through the forest.

Suddenly they saw the glimmer of water through the trees.

"There she is," cried Smith. "We will soon be able to see the island."

Old King Brady came to a halt.

He put up his hand.

"Wait!" he said.

Harry and Smith came to a halt.

They looked wonderingly at the old detective.

Old King Brady bent down and scanned the bed of moss and ferns under his feet.

Then he made a short trip to the right and returned. He next went at a right angle.

Then he looked at his companions.

"It is so," he said.

"What?" asked Smith.

"We have struck a trail."

"A trail?"

"Yes."

"By jove!" exclaimed Harry. "How can you see it?"

"I'll tell you," said the old detective. "When I was a youth I spent a season with a village of Indians in the Northwest. I learned from them how to follow a trail."

"Indeed!" cried Smith, eagerly. "Then you have struck one?"

"I have."

"Which way does it go?"

Old King Brady pointed toward the lake shore.

"Straight for the water," he said.

"Do you think——"

"Yes, I think, but I do not know, that it is the trail of a party of the outlaws. I should say there were four in the party. Let us go on."

The old detective took the dimly discernible trail like a sleuth-hound.

He followed it with unerring skill and faithfulness right to the little clearing at the lake shore.

Then he gave a start.

"Look!" he gasped.

Three hundred yards out in the lake was a towering pile of granite. It was the island spoken of by Smith.

And as they looked across the shimmering surface of the water they saw a light canoe.

Even as the detectives gazed at it, and noted that it held four occupants, it vanished.

There was no apparent crevice in the ledge; no opening visible through which it could have gone.

Astounded and puzzled the three men continued to gaze.

"Did you see it?" whispered Smith.

"Yes."

"Where did it go?"

"That is the question."

Old King Brady nodded grimly.



"It is as I thought," he said. "The stronghold of the gang is on that island."

"I believe it," said Smith, but with sudden pallor. "Indeed, I am loth to accept the fact."

"Why?"

"It is a death knell to my hopes."

The detectives looked at him.

"I will explain," said the young Chicagoan. "It convinces me of the almost utter futility of trying to rescue Alice and Hugh."

"Pshaw!" said Old King Brady. "That is not so."

"Oh, yes it is. I can see no way to wipe this gang out."

"Why not?"

"Why, how can it be done? On that island they can hold an army at bay."

"You forget that we have strategy to rely upon."

But Smith was thoroughly discouraged.

He flung himself moodily upon the ground.

"It can't be done," he said. "That stronghold is inaccessible. We can never get in there."

Old King Brady chuckled.

"Wait till darkness comes, and we will see," he said.

"It is near at hand."

"Yes; we have not long to wait."

"What plan do you propose?" asked Smith, curiously.

But before the old detective could reply a distant sound caused all to turn and gaze intently into the forest.

Old King Brady made a sign and they slipped into the underbrush.

The sound was that of human voices from the distance.

And as they crouched there in the dense growth they were assured that somebody was coming through the woods.

The voices grew plainer, and then the tramp of feet and the rustling of branches were heard.

The detectives were on the alert.

A moment later there burst from the undergrowth a long line of men.

A score of them in all there were.

They carried litters on which were piled camp effects.

Down to the water's edge they went, the Bradys recognizing them at once as the gang from Black Point.

Young and Blaney were with them.

The latter placed a silver whistle to his lips and blew a shrill blast.

Then he turned to Young, and his words were plainly heard by the three watchers.

"It's a pity those two hounds of the law escaped. We must turn to and scour the woods for them."

Young smiled grimly.

"It's our own fault."

"What do you mean?"

"We had the game. We ought to have made short work of them."

An oath escaped Blaney.

"If I get a grip on them again," he said, "I can assure you they will never get the chance to fool me again."

"I should hope so," said Young. "But how in the deuce did they get outside and overpower the guard?"

"I tell you it looks like outside work."

"Ah, you think they were rescued?"

"To tell the truth, I do."

"Then that was Smith's work."

"Very likely. Hang that young cub! He is making himself too free by far in this locality. We must put a stop on him."

As they heard this conversation, Smith and the detectives were greatly interested.

Smith indulged in a prodigious wink, and Harry with difficulty controlled himself.

But now from the rock-bound island a boat was seen to put out.

It held but one occupant.

Blaney now turned to the score of outlaws, and said:

"You may make camp here for to-night, boys. I've got some other work for you to-morrow."

At this the outlaws laid down their litters, and began to make camp-fires.

The detectives found their position now by far too risky, so they withdrew deeper into the forest.

They gained a point on the shore half a mile beyond.

Here they ensconced themselves behind some boulders and watched the island tower, as it might be called.

"I think we had better wait for darkness," said Old King Brady. "It is going to be a very dark night, and I don't think our presence in the neighborhood is suspected."

"Just so," cried Smith. "I think we can work with safety."

"Hello! What is that?"

From the topmost crag of the island tower there came a vivid flash, a puff of smoke, and a sullen boom.

There was a terrific splash in the water not fifty feet from the detectives.

The latter were astounded.

"What the deuce do you call that?" cried Smith.

"A cannon!"

"That is what it was."

"Whew! They are well defended, are they not?"

"I should say so. To think of their making a fortress, a miniature Gibraltar, here in the wilds."

"It is evidence of one thing," said Old King Brady.

"What?"

"They mean to resist to the last any force sent against them, and feel confident of holding their own."

"That is so. I should think they might hold an army at bay."

"They could," said Old King Brady. "It would take very heavy artillery to dislodge them."

"Do you think they fired at us?" asked Harry.

"Pshaw! No, of course not. I imagine that was a signal gun to call in pickets or scouts, or, perhaps, some wandering party."

That this was the truth was proved within the hour

For just as darkness shut down the lake became dotted



with canoes coming from various points, and all arriving at the island.

When just under the cliffs they disappeared, just how, or where, the detectives could not see.

Smith shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, he said, unctuously, "I should say that we were in luck to reach this point and escape detection. We must have run a literal gauntlet to get into this place."

"You are right," agreed Old King Brady. "And that ought to be to our advantage."

"No doubt it will."

"The best thing we can do is to keep quiet and wait."

"Yes."

"Our chance will come later."

"So it will."

So they settled down in the bushy covert and waited. Time passed slowly, indeed.

But finally a Stygian gloom pervaded the whole country, and the lake was still and quiet.

## CHAPTER X.

### WORKING IN THE DARK.

The detectives waited until near the hour of midnight.

Then it was arranged that Smith should go back for the canoe, and come silently back as close to the shore as possible.

Smith departed on his errand.

It seemed an eternity to the detectives until the light splash of the paddle was heard close by.

The Bradys crept down and got into the canoe.

They were soon drifting out into the centre of the lake.

Gently Smith manipulated the paddle, and kept the canoe head on for the island.

Far off to the right burned the fires of the outlaw camp.

High up on the island wall there came down to the ears of the detectives a curious sound.

At first it was something like the call of a moose; then the note was changed to the shrill note of a night hawk, followed by the hoot of an owl.

This was answered at times from various parts of the lake.

It did not deceive the detectives.

"Those are signals," said Old King Brady. "It shows that sentinels are posted everywhere around the lake."

"That is right," agreed Smith.

"It's a wonder we did not run into them," said Harry.

"For which we may thank our luck; but here is the shadow of the island wall."

The canoe now drifted into a pall of Stygian gloom.

In a few moments they heard the water lapping the walls of the cliff.

Suddenly the three voyagers received a startling shock.

A voice sounded close beside them.

It was a deep breath and a muttered curse. Something brushed by the canoe, making it rock slightly.

The detectives knew at once what it meant.

It was another canoe passing outward from the island.

The occupant was certainly an expert canoeist, for his paddle made not the slightest ripple.

The detectives sat very still and statue-like. In another moment, however, the danger was past.

The canoe was far out in the lake.

The detectives drifted close in now to the wall of the cliff.

They did not venture to even whisper, but they felt sure that they were near the outlaw den.

And the canoe seemed impelled by a slight current. The next moment it gently scraped against the wall of the cliff.

Then our adventurers received a great surprise.

They were unable to see the sky.

A great black canopy hung over them. There was a chilly sensation, and for the first time Old King Brady ventured to whisper:

"We are in for it, boys. We are in an underground passage."

But the words were scarcely out of his mouth when the temperature suddenly became warmer again, and the dark sky was once more seen faintly above them.

They had drifted through some crevice in the cliff, and, as near as they could guess, were in an interior basin of the island.

That they had gained an entrance to the stronghold of the Canada gang they had no doubt.

But with this realization came a thrilling question:

Would they ever be able to get out again? Might this not be a trap from which there would be no escape?

But they were in for it, and not one thought of a return.

The shores of the little basin of water beyond the high cliffs of the island were steep and rocky.

This much could be seen in the dim light.

Far away above the ascent could be heard the faint vibration of voices and laughter.

A dull glow rising into the night air betokened the presence of light on that higher ground.

The detectives were astonished to think they should have been able to thus easily penetrate the den of the outlaws—this stronghold, which was considered to be so impregnable.

Of course they understood that to be caught would mean certain death.

That the darkness was their ally, and the explanation of all, they well knew.

They had no means of determining the points of the compass, or even guessing at them.

But eyes and ears were carefully employed, and developments coolly awaited.

The canoe drifted on, and seemed to be at the mercy of a rather slow but strong current.

While the three invaders of the outlaws' stronghold were



on the *qui vive*, an incident of thrilling sort was apt to turn up at any moment.

'They must be ready for it.

On drifted the canoe for some time. Suddenly it grated on something hard and came to a stop.

In the inky darkness it was impossible to see whether it was the shore or not.

But Smith leaned silently over in the bow and touched hard sand with his fingers.

He listened intently.

Then he ventured to whisper:

"I think we have drifted ashore. There is hard ground here. Will we risk a disembarkation?"

"Yes," replied Old King Brady, with promptness.

"Very good! Keep steady, and I will get out first."

And this the daring young Chicagoan proceeded to do.

He placed one foot upon the sand, and then drew the bow of the canoe wholly out of the water.

The two detectives silently followed.

The canoe was safely secured.

Then they started along the shore as silently as possible.

It seemed almost impossible to accomplish anything, so dense was the darkness.

But they stumbled on at imminent risk of betrayal.

The shore was rocky in the extreme, and for a time it was hard finding a place of ascent.

But they finally succeeded and crept up the face of the cliff.

As they went higher the darkness seemed to grow less.

The distant illumination became clearer, and the murmur of voices plain.

Once they heard footsteps, and an unknown person passed near them.

But they were not discovered.

Certainly luck was with them.

The detectives were much pleased with the success of their undertaking thus far, and Old King Brady whispered:

"We ought to be able to do something now. We are certainly right in the heart of the stronghold."

"That is right," agreed Smith; "but we may not get out alive."

This was true enough.

The trio of adventurers, however, now had gained comparatively high ground.

The island was a high plateau, and they realized that they were now not far from the outlaws' camp.

The lights of the fires were plainly visible, and the forms of the villains could be seen outlined against the light.

Though they did not realize it, the detectives were safer here than when they were upon the bosom of the lake.

The gang deemed it impossible for outsiders to find their way into the place.

So even if their figures had been distinguished in the

darkness their identity would never have been suspected, and they would have been safe enough.

They now drew nearer to the island camp of the gang.

Here, rude cabins of logs formed their habitation, as at Black Point.

The winters were long and bitterly cold, and it was necessary to have warm quarters.

The detectives drew as near to the fire-lit line of habitation as they dared.

Even at this late hour the gang of thieves were engaged in games of chance about the fires. There was no doubt that the gaming fever kept many of them up all night.

However, the detectives were not especially encouraged. They were at a loss just how to proceed.

Seeking the cover of some underbrush for a covert, they began to discuss the situation.

"It is my belief," said Harry, "that the prisoners are confined in one of those log cabins."

"Well," asked Smith, "which one, and how can we get to it?"

"That is the question."

"Can anyone suggest a plan?"

"I can," said Old King Brady.

"Ah!" exclaimed Smith, with interest. "What is it?"

The old detective was silent a moment, then he slowly said:

"If you will agree to remain right here until I return, I think I can learn all that is necessary."

"What?" exclaimed Harry, eagerly. "You are going out alone?"

"Yes."

"Let me do that?"

"There you are," said the old detective, with a shrug of his shoulders. "Of course you won't do as I want you to."

"That settles it," said Harry, crestfallen, "Go ahead! We shall wait with much anxiety."

"All right."

"One moment," said Smith.

"Well?"

"How long shall we wait for your return?"

"Just an hour," replied Old King Brady.

"An hour?"

"Yes. If I don't return in that time you may follow any plan which may seem best to you. But, if possible, let us set a place for meeting again."

"Where?"

"We will say, at the landing place in the mouth of Roaring River."

"When?" asked Harry.

"To-morrow, if possible. It may be that we shall not all escape from here alive; but whoever reaches the rendezvous first let him wait a reasonable length of time for the others."

This seemed like a good plan.

"All right," agreed Harry. "We will follow out that plan."



## CHAPTER XI.

## CLEVER WORK.

Old King Brady glided away into the darkness.

Let us follow him.

The old detective was a clever strategist and shadow.

It would be play for him to find his way into that fire-lit encampment and all around it without discovery.

In a short while he was standing at a window of one of the cabins.

He could peer through a crevice in the logs and see the interior.

The sight which he saw gave him a thrill.

By chance he had struck the headquarters of the leaders of the gang.

No others than Young and Blaney were seated at a table, and upon it was a heap of papers.

The two ringleaders were holding a secret consultation.

There was no guard at the door, and no person was in sight to see the detective at his post.

Fifty feet away was a heap of burning logs.

A dozen of the outlaws were gathered about this engaged in playing cards.

They were too deeply engrossed to pay the slightest heed to anything else.

So Old King Brady felt secure.

He applied his ear to the crack and could hear every word spoken.

"Well, I call it a fair division," said Young, with an oath. "The men in the gang are well paid. Every one of them is sleek and fat. It means six hundred all around for the last job."

"I think so," agreed Blaney; "but some of 'em——"

"Oh, there's always croakers in every gang. You can't suit them all, be sure."

"I guess that's right."

"Now, I tell you, we ought to do something about the Maynard prisoners."

"Ah!" said Blaney. "Can you suggest what ought to be done?"

"Yes."

"What?"

"Dispose of them if we don't get a ransom soon."

"When you were in Chicago did you see the widow?"

"I sent a representative."

"What did she say?"

"She was defiant."

Blaney's face hardened.

"We can't trifle much longer," he said, angrily. "These prisoners are a load on my mind."

"I have an idea as to their disposition," said Young.

"What?"

"The girl is rather pretty."

"Yes."

"I am sort of stuck on her. Suppose we put the lad where he can tell no tales, and I'll take the girl."

"Marry her?" asked Blaney.

"Yes."

The outlaw leader laughed.

"Well, you are a dandy, Young," he declared. "I never supposed you would let a woman fool you. I am more than surprised."

Young flushed hotly.

"That's my affair," he said, testily. "I can assume the right."

"Oh, of course, if you want to," said Blaney, with a change of manner; "but now what are we going to do for defense?"

"Defense?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

"Don't you know?"

"No."

"Is it possible that you have not heard? We are to be wiped off the earth by the Eagle Camp men."

Young looked surprised.

"The lunmbermen?" he gasped.

"Yes."

"You don't mean it?"

"Yes, I do."

"When did you learn that fact?"

"Word was brought to me a few days since that they meditated a descent upon our camp."

"Well, they have courage. We will wipe them off the face of the earth."

"I hope so. Yet I can tell you that they have a strong organization. We will need to strengthen our defenses."

Young snapped his fingers.

"They will be killed like sheep," he said. "I hope they will attack us. We will give them a lesson which the whole Northwest will not soon forget."

Blaney's face darkened.

"That we will," he agreed. "I hate them, and would see them exterminated root and branch."

"They shall be."

"To-morrow we must pay a visit to the North Camp."

"I think it is necessary. Shall I go along with you?"

"I think so. Frisbie sent me word that the men needed discipline. They are getting rough."

"Hang a few of 'em."

"That's what will come of it. Well, I shall start about noon with the longboat, and take three men to row. Will you be ready?"

"I will."

"How about that party with the pay-roll for Eagle Camp? Have you heard when they will leave Marquette?"

"I think not under three days."

"We ought to intercept them. They will have a good twenty thousand in gold."

"We will do it."

Blaney lit his pipe, but Young started up with a yawn.



"I think I will retire," he said. "I rather need sleep."

"All right; but one thing more?"

"What?"

"Have you sent out scouts to locate those accursed detectives?"

"Yes."

"Hadn't we ought to hear from them soon?"

"Certainly we had. I would not be surprised if we should hear at any moment of their being wiped out."

"I hope so," said Blaney.

Old King Brady listened to this with a grim smile.

He wondered what the villains' sensations would be if they knew of the proximity of the hounds of the law.

What the detective had heard was of great value.

Just then Young leaned over the table and consulted with Blaney in an undertone.

They were thus engaged when an unexpected thing occurred.

A figure came hurrying through the gloom and up to the cabin door.

Old King Brady shrunk close up to the log wall.

The fellow had not seen him.

He tapped on the door.

"Come in," cried Blaney.

The door opened and there crossed the threshold a lithe, sinewy man dressed in deerskin.

He was a perfect type of woodsman, but his face was long and treacherous in its cast, and his eyes keen as those of a hawk.

"Ridley!" exclaimed the outlaw chief. "Here is our man now, Young. Speak up, Ridley! What luck have you had?"

The woodsman made a suggestive motion with his hands.

"It is well," he said.

"You don't mean to say that you have trapped the foxes?"

"They are dead," said Ridley, with a bow. "I have the word of four of our men, who shot the two detectives while they were crossing Black Swamp. They fell into the ooze and were swallowed up."

Blaney clapped his hands, but Young was incredulous.

"Come," he said. "How are we to believe that? You have not seen the bodies. May they not have been some others?"

A queer expression contorted the woodsman's features.

"Ridley's tongue is not crooked," he said.

He drew his keen hunting knife and flung it on the floor with such force that it was half buried in the soft wood.

"I swear it by that," he said, with Indian calmness.

Young put up his hands.

"Enough!" he cried. "I believe you, Ridley. Then the Bradys are at the bottom of the Black Swamp. Hurrah! That is a good job."

"I think they will yet learn that it is going to be no easy matter to break up the Canada gang."

"Well, you bet."

"We can defy the country."

"You are right we can, Ridley. Go down to the commissary's cabin and get a good bottle of whisky. You shall be rewarded for this later. You have done a good job."

The woodsman went out.

He passed away in the gloom.

Young walked up and down the cabin floor with light step and jubilant manner.

"Hurrah!" he cried again. "We fooled those two foxes in good shape. Do you know I feared those two chaps, Blaney."

"They were hard to beat."

"Well, you bet."

"But they will trouble us no more."

Young rubbed his hands briskly.

"Now if I can bring the girl to terms," he said, "all will be well."

"I wish

"I think I will go around and see her a little while."

"Isn't it a little late for love-making?" said Blaney, with a laugh.

"Oh, she will be up. They say she sits up nearly all night with that driveling brother of hers. I'll go around and see my pretty dove. Perhaps I can make terms with her to-night."

With a coarse laugh and jest Young passed out into the night.

He passed almost *near* enough to Old King Brady to touch him.

The old detective had heard all this with interest.

He thought of his companions.

"They can wait for me," he thought. "The hour is not yet up."

So he glided shadow-like after the villain.

Young threaded his way among the log huts, and finally came to one on the door of which he pounded.

A light shone out of the low window and showed that the occupants were yet awake.

The door opened, and the slatternly figure of a woman stood on the threshold.

"Hello, Lucinda!" said Young. "Is the pretty bird asleep?"

"Asleep!" croaked the woman in discordant tones. "No. I wish she was forever, though. She's the drottest night owl I ever saw."

"Good," said Young, in an evilly exultant voice. "I have come to see her on important business. You can step out for a while. Do you understand?"

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE RESCUE.

"Oho!" croaked the woman, like some bird of prey, "that's the way of it, eh? Oh, yes. I was young and pooty myself onct. Well, I wish ye luck."



Young brushed past the woman, who wound a shawl about her head, and flitted away into the darkness.

Old King Brady drew very close to the window.

His whole being was rigid and alert.

One hand rested on the butt of his rifle, and he made up his mind to rid the earth of one monster, if the occasion demanded it.

He managed to obtain a view of the cabin through a crack.

It was not unlike the other huts—with a bunk in one corner, and rustic table and stools.

A fire burned on the hearth, and lent a dull radiance to the dingy room.

Sitting at one corner of the fireplace was a young girl.

In all his life Old King Brady thought he had never seen a more lovely face.

Alice Maynard was a girl of wonderful beauty, and as pure and good as she was beautiful.

As Young entered, she looked up into his face.

Instantly she paled, and rising shrunk instinctively back against the rude fireplace.

A light of inquisitorial fear came into her lustrous eyes.

Young glowered upon her like a huge spider upon its prey.

"Well," he said, in a tense voice, "you hardly expected so late a visitor, did you, my pretty houri?"

"What do you wish here?" she asked, in a rigid way.

"You," replied the villain.

"I do not understand you."

"Then you are dull, and I don't believe that," said Young, with a leer. "You are pretty as a picture, I vow. I'm in love with you, my beauty. You shall marry me."

The girl's face turned white as chalk, and she trembled like an aspen.

She shrunk back as far as she could against the fire frame. A light of terror was in her eyes.

"Oh, you are very coy," said Young, taking a step nearer. "You shall be tamed. What? Afraid, are you? Humph! A worse fate could befall you than to become the wife of Mr. Richard Young."

"I shall never marry you," she said, in a rigid voice. "I beg you not to persecute me."

The villain laughed harshly.

Oh, we shall see about that," he said. "What are your reasons, my pretty dove?"

"I do not care to give them."

"Come, don't be foolish. I am a good sort of a fellow, and I'll make you a good husband. Will you agree?"

"Never!"

"I have wealth, and can give you all that your heart can desire. You shall be a queen."

Scorn and contempt were flashed at him from the girl's eyes.

"It is useless," she said, rigidly. "I would rather die."

Anger and wounded pride shone in Young's eyes.

"Oh, you would, eh?" he gritted. "We will give you a

chance to prove that. Let me tell you that you will die like your driveling brother, if——"

A cry of agony pealed from the young girl's lips.

She started forward with clasped hands in entreaty.

"Oh, my brother!" she cried. "You have not killed him. Oh, do not tell me that."

Young stood with a cruel smile upon his lips.

He gazed at her terror with the complacency of the thorough villain.

"Ah!" he said. "I thought that would bring you to time. You don't want to see your brother die, do you, my pretty maid?"

She drew a gasping breath.

"Then you have not killed him?"

"Oh, no, not yet!"

"And you will not?"

"That depends," said Young, taking a step nearer. "What is your brother's life worth to you?"

"My own life! Kill me, and spare him."

Young's gaze was now one of a devouring sort.

The girl's beauty and nobility set his whole being aflame.

"I think not," he said in his calculating way; "but kill him I certainly shall, unless——"

"Oh, no, no!" screamed the frantic girl. "I beg of you on my knees, spare my brother. I will bless you; I will call upon heaven to reward you!"

"There is one thing you can do to save your brother's life," said the villain.

"Oh, tell me what?"

"Give me your heart. Marry me. I will be a good husband to you."

Alice Maynard threw up her hands in a gesture of awful despair. She reeled back against the wall.

Young took a step nearer.

"I give you warning," he hissed. "Those are my terms. You must agree to them. I shall come here again this time to-morrow. You must be ready to answer me then."

One moment he hesitated, and half made a move to seize her in his arms.

But she retreated with a little cry of terror to the far end of the room.

Old King Brady instinctively grasped his rifle, and for a moment stood ready to shoot the monster.

But happily this did not prove to be necessary.

Young turned to the door.

His face had a frightfully malevolent expression as he said:

"This time to-morrow. Remember! You shall agree to my terms or pay the forfeit."

The door closed behind him.

When he had gone, the girl prisoner sank down upon a stool overcome, and covered her face with her hands.

A terrible sense of despair came to her. The detective's whole being was thrilled with sympathy for her.

He kept his position cautiously, however, until the villain, Young, had gone beyond hearing and sight.

A daring resolve had seized the old detective.



He was determined to carry it out. This was nothing more or less than the rescue of the captive girl.

He knew that he must act with quickness, for the woman who kept watch over her would return.

So, as soon as he was assured that Young was out of nearing, Old King Brady boldly glided to the cabin door.

He raised the latch and entered.

Instantly the girl prisoner was upon her feet.

With flashing eyes and pallid face she retreated to the far end of the room.

It was evident that she regarded the old detective with distrust and fear.

"Have no fear, Miss Maynard," said Old King Brady, calmly. "I am your friend."

Her manner slowly relaxed. Something like a light of hope sprang into her eyes.

"A friend!" she exclaimed. "I can hardly believe that. A friend in this place?"

"Yes," replied Old King Brady. "I have risked my life to come here to save you."

"To save me?"

"Yes."

"With a little gasping cry she started forward.

"Oh, do you speak the truth? Who are you?" she cried.

"I am a detective. I have companions in waiting near here. There is no time to spare. Are you ready to go with me?"

"At once," replied the overjoyed girl prisoner. Then she paused. "But my brother?" she said.

"Where is he?"

"In the next cabin."

"Is he under guard?"

"Yes."

"We can do nothing for him now, then," said the old detective. "We will try that later."

For a moment she hesitated.

"I cannot go without him," she said.

"But you cannot aid him by staying. Do not be foolish. Come quickly, and we will rescue him later."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

Without further demur she arose and quickly followed Old King Brady out of the cabin.

They glided away in the darkness; but they had barely reached the limits of the encampment when a man arose in their path.

He brushed closely by them with an oath.

The darkness saved them, for he could not recognize either. He passed on swiftly.

For an instant Old King Brady had nerved himself for a fight.

But the contingency was soon over. He now took the young girl's arm and pushed rapidly on.

It was a matter of no slight sort to find his way to the place where Smith and Harry awaited him.

More than an hour had elapsed since he had left them; but he hoped to yet find them there.

After a wide detour and some calculation he did finally succeed in finding the covert.

He crept carefully forward and gave a faint whistle.

It was not answered.

A chill was upon the old detective.

"They have gone," he reflected. "It is necessary for us to get out of this place before daylight, or we will not leave it alive."

This was true.

So Old King Brady decided to act with quick decision, and without regard to his companions.

He believed he could find his way back to the spot where they had left the canoe.

So he led the trembling young girl down the rocky descent with all possible haste.

They soon reached the foot, and made their way along the water's edge.

There was no time to lose.

Already the gray of dawn was beginning to take the place of the dense darkness. Old King Brady was now able to see his way.

He found the canoe just where they had left it.

It was but a moment's work for him to assist his fair charge to a seat in it.

Just as he was about to paddle away, however, a faint tremolo whistle came from the gloom above.

He instantly stopped his paddle.

He knew the signal.

It was given by Harry.

A moment later three dark forms appeared on the shore.

"Hi, partner! come back!" called Harry in a loud whisper. "We must get out of here at once!"

"Well, I should say so!" exclaimed Old King Brady. "What does all this mean?"

The next moment the canoe touched the shore. A tall young man was with Smith and Harry.

Instantly Alice Maynard sprang out upon the shore with a cry of joy, and rushed into the arms of the tall youth.

"Oh, Hugh, my brother!" she cried, wildly. "You are safe also. Now I am happy, indeed."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### BOUND FOR EAGLE LAKE.

After the departure of Old King Brady Harry and Smith fell into a whispered discussion of the situation.

"I say," said the young Chicagoan, "we are to meet him here in an hour."

"Yes," said Harry.

"Well, why should we waste that hour?"

"What do you mean?"

"Let us do a little work on our own account."

The idea struck Harry favorably.



"Capital!" he said. "I see no reason why we should not. Come ahead!"

So the two began a detour, and stole into the encampment at its upper end.

By the merest chance they hit upon the very cabin in which Hugh Maynard was confined.

An armed guard was at the door, but he was half asleep and they easily stole up behind him.

Harry closed his fingers upon his throat in time to prevent an outcry, and Smith securely bound and gagged him.

It was then easy work to release the captive youth, who was, indeed, surprised and overjoyed as well.

They next visited the cabin in which Alice had been confined.

But she was gone.

At once they suspected it was the work of Old King Brady, and made haste to get back to the canoe.

And they succeeded in reaching there in good time, as we have seen.

The meeting between Smith and the girl he loved was, indeed, a happy one; but there was little time for extended explanations.

They were by no means out of danger.

In fact, they were still virtually in the lions' den. They must at once get out as best they could.

The little canoe luckily held them all.

So they entered it and Harry and Smith silently dipped their paddles in the water.

They could now discern the ridge of land on either side, and were able to get their bearings.

It was but a short time before they reached the cut in the granite wall of the island, by means of which they had drifted into the place.

A few strokes of the paddle sent them through this and out into Moon Lake.

From the lack of any sounds of commotion in their rear it was safe to conclude that their escape had not been discovered.

"We shall not be safe until we are many miles from Moon Lake," declared Smith.

"Then let us make haste to get away from here," said Harry.

As they paddled on the mists of morning began to float up from the water, and objects became momentarily plainer.

But luck was with the little party.

They did not meet any craft belonging to the outlaws, nor could they be seen from the shore.

A dull glow from the foggy shore, however, told them of the location of the outlaws' camp.

They passed close by it and soon rounded the crescent shore of the lake, and were well on their way to the mouth of the Roaring River.

An hour later they were paddling up this.

That their escape had been discovered by this time they knew for a certainty.

The outlaws would soon be hot upon their track.

There was no time to lose, and the detectives quickly laid their plans.

They had in part accomplished their purpose.

The rescue of the prisoners was complete.

But the breaking up of the gang was yet to be accomplished.

"I have a plan to suggest," said Old King Brady.

Instantly all gave their attention.

"What is it?" asked Smith.

"We are in your hands, Mr. Brady," said Alice. "We have faith that you will bring us safely out of trouble."

"I shall hope to do so," replied the old detective. "Now, we have slipped the enemy at present."

"Yes."

"But I am sure they will soon be about us as thick as hornets."

"That is sure," said Smith.

"If we attempt to reach the shores of Superior we may be overtaken. Moreover, when we get there we will have no boat or means of transportation to a place of safety."

"We would have to go into hiding."

"Yes; and then they would ferret us out. It looks to me as if it would be necessary to remain in Canada until the gang is broken up."

There was an interval of silence.

It is too bad," said Smith. "I wish we could plan to relieve the deep anxiety of the mother in Chicago."

"Yes," agreed Old King Brady; "I wish heartily that we could; but I see no way at present."

"We must remain here, as Mr. Brady says," declared Alice. "I can see the impracticability of crossing Lake Superior in this canoe."

"That is so," cried Hugh. "Well, we are quite used to roughing it."

"Perhaps we can find a secure hiding place somewhere in these woods," said Smith, dubiously; "but when will we ever get out?"

"Do you know I overheard Young declare that they expected an attack from the lumbermen of Eagle Camp," said Old King Brady.

Smith gave a sharp cry of joy.

"Ah! there is the idea!" he cried. "Why did we not think of it before? There could be no safer place for us than at Eagle Lake."

"That is what I thought," declared Old King Brady.

"Why, certainly," cried Smith. "Some of the lumbermen have wives, and I'm sure we can make Alice quite comfortable up there."

"And enlist with the lumbermen against the gang."

"Just so."

It seemed like a capital plan.

"But the question is," said Old King Brady, "do any of us know the way to Eagle Lake?"

"I do," declared Smith. "We take a branch of the Roaring River two miles from here. It is forty miles as the crow flies to Eagle Lake. We have to carry four times."



"We will do it," cried Old King Brady. "Do you feel equal to the trip, Miss Maynard?"

"Indeed I do," said the young girl, pluckily. "Freedom is very dear, and I am willing to try anything."

"All right," cried Smith, bending to the paddle. "We will turn into the North Branch just above here. It will mislead pursuit, for the gang will hardly think of our going in that direction."

On sped the light canoe.

The two intervening miles were covered in quick time.

The canoe was turned into the North Branch.

This differed greatly from the main stream.

The current was swift and powerful; but there were no rocks or rapids to make the journey perilous.

So the first twenty miles of the trip were easily covered before the day was spent.

Then it was necessary to make a carry of a mile overland to another river which ran to the northeast.

The banks of this were reached about nightfall.

All were fatigued, and it was proposed to make camp.

Nothing had been seen of any members of the Canada gang, and the little party felt safe.

A roaring fire was made, and then Smith went into the woods and brought back a fawn.

While all were seated about the camp fire in the evening their spirits rose high.

Hugh alone showed any ill effects from the journey.

The boy had suffered from a very severe sprain of the knee joint, and this now pained him badly.

But he was brave and cheerful, and joined in the merry songs and laughter of all.

The night was as dark as the previous one. Beyond the circle of firelight nothing could be seen.

Suddenly, as they were engaged in jolly converse, an unexpected thing happened.

Old King Brady sprang to his feet like a flash of lightning, and seized his gun.

Instantly the others started up.

"What is the matter?" cried Smith. But it was not necessary to find an answer to the question.

For it was before them.

In that moment a chill fell upon the hearts of all. It looked as if disaster had overtaken them.

For from the fastnesses of the forest there had suddenly appeared before them a file of rough-looking men.

They halted just in the edge of the circle of firelight.

They were armed to the teeth, and as they stood there in a dark half circle, they presented a forbidding appearance, indeed.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### REINFORCEMENTS.

But only for a moment were our adventurers thus placed in a state of doubt and fear.

Then a great cry went up from Smith.

"Hurrah!" he cried. "It is Big Tom Jennings from Eagle Lake."

"That's who it is," came a hearty voice from the forest. "I hope we don't intrude."

"Intrude!" cried Smith, eagerly; "well, I rather guess not. Come right in."

"We thought we might presume on yer hospitality a bit and share yer camp fire."

"You are more than welcome."

With this Big Tom strode into the circle of firelight.

He was of gigantic figure and frank, open features.

He was introduced to the others by Smith.

"You can be sure we have a friend in Mr. Jennings," said Smith. "I met him when I was on a visit to Eagle Lake. He is the superintendent of the lumber camp."

"We are glad to know that," said Old King Brady; "for we have need of friends."

Jennings turned and gave orders to his men, who at once built a fire near by, and proceeded to make camp.

"We saw the light of your fire some distance away," said the big woodsman, "so we thought we would investigate. We had no thought of finding you here."

"Where are you bound?" asked Smith.

Big Tom looked shrewdly at his questioner.

"Can't ye guess?"

"I see you have your war paint on."

"Well, you bet! We are setting out to wipe Bill Blaney and his gang off the face of the earth."

"Ah!" cried Smith, excitedly. "We heard that you were on the way."

Big Tom gave a start.

He frowned, and said:

"Do you mean that?"

"Yes."

"Where did ye hear it?"

"In the stronghold of the gang at Moon Lake."

Big Tom whistled slowly.

"Then they know that we are coming," he said, disappointedly.

"Oh, yes."

"It is queer. There must be spies in our camp. We had planned it for a surprise."

"Ah, indeed!"

"Yes, and if we had been able to keep the thing quiet I think we could have surrounded them."

"Indeed, it is too bad," said Old King Brady. "I can't imagine how they got the information; but I know personally that they did get it."

"And how is it, may I ask, I find you here?"

"We have rescued these two young people from the clutches of the Canada gang," said Old King Brady.

"You invaded their den?"

"Yes."

"How did you succeed in doing that?"

With this Smith detailed an account of their experiences.



Big Tom listened with most intense interest.

"Well, of all things!" he exclaimed. "I don't see how you ever did it; but, by the great horn spoon, if you can show us the way in there I think we can put an end to that gang instant." "

"Well, I think we can," said Old King Brady.

"Do ye mean it?"

"Yes."

"Come back with me at once, then, and we'll try the game to-morrow night."

Old King Brady looked at Harry and Smith.

"I think you and your friend can safely escort the young lady down to Eagle Camp?" asked Old King Brady of Smith.

But the young Chicagoan hesitated.

"I am anxious to be in at the death," he said. "I want to see that gang exterminated."

"Then you wish to go with us?"

"Yes."

"But those young people can never find their way down there alone," said Old King Brady.

"That is so," said Smith, reluctantly. "Will you not wait here for my return?"

"Look here," said Big Tom, "we'll settle that at once. Is not the young lady's brother with her?"

"Of course he is," cried Hugh, who had come up and overheard this; "and I want to go with you."

"Nonsense!" said Smith. "You can't do it, Hugh."

"Why can't I?"

"Look at your foot. It is so lame that you couldn't begin to travel with us."

A bitter look of regret shone in the youth's eyes.

"Well, he said, slowly, "I suppose that is so. I will go down with Sis to the camp. You go ahead, Weldon, and wipe the rascals out."

"Do you think you could really find your way?" asked Smith, eagerly.

"Of course I can."

Smith hesitated a bit.

"No," he said, finally. "It will not do. I must go, also."

But at this moment Big Tom spoke up.

"I have a plan," he said; "if you care to adopt it."

"What is it?"

"I'll give my word the young lady and her brother shall be safely taken down to Eagle Lake."

All looked at him wonderingly.

"What do you mean?" asked Harry.

"I will send half a dozen of my men with them."

"Oh, Tom!" cried Smith, eagerly; "will you do that? You know how much I want to go with you."

"And go you shall," said the woodsman. "I'll see that the little gal and her brother gets down there all safe."

"That is good."

The question was settled, and now all began to think of turning in and getting some sleep.

In a short while the entire camp was wrapped in slumber.

But at an early hour the next morning all were astir.

Big Tom was as good as his word, and selected half a dozen stout and faithful men to escort Alice and Hugh down to the Eagle Camp.

They disappeared down the river in canoes.

Then the fifty odd stout lumbermen under Big Tom's lead started out up the river to reach the junction with the North Branch.

They had canoes, and it formed a big flotilla of armed men.

Silently they paddled up the river and into the North Branch. Then they made the carry and reached the Roaring River in the afternoon.

"To-night," said Big Tom, "we will try to get into the island camp."

"We will guide you to the best of our ability," said Smith. "I can give you no further guarantee."

"And we ask for none."

Darkness had settled down over the country when they finally reached the mouth of the river, and the canoes glided down into Moon Lake.

"We have another large party coming in from the west," said Tom. "It is our plan to cut off retreat."

"I suppose you know that the outlaws outnumber you just now?"

"Yes."

"But your men are doubtless better fighters."

"I hardly think that; but we reckon on giving the enemy a surprise. If we get them at a disadvantage, the odds are with us."

"That is true," agreed Harry.

The lumbermen, under Big Tom's direction, now secreted themselves in the woods along the shore to wait for the darkness to become more dense.

They had not long to wait.

It soon shut down thick and inky. Far up the lake a red star of light burned.

The attacking party studied it with interest.

"There is no doubt that it is a signal light," said Old King Brady, after a while.

"They are on the lookout for us."

"Yes."

"Humph!" exclaimed Smith. "They will have to look sharper than they did before."

"That is true."

At ten o'clock it was decided to make the move.

A thick fog had now settled down upon the face of the lake.

It was twenty feet in depth, and into it the flotilla of canoes went blindly.

But Big Tom had cleverly provided for the possibility of the canoes straying apart.

Each was connected with the other by a thin cord.

In this manner, in single file, they softly and silently glided down the lake.



Every paddle was raised deftly by skilled hands, and every canoe was as silent as the grave.

In the first canoe were Old and Young King Brady, Smith and Big Tom Jennings.

They were keenly on the alert, and watched and listened intently.

"We must be somewhere near the island," whispered Smith.

"Yes," replied Old King Brady; "I think so. Listen!"

Plainly to their ears now came the gentle lapping of water against a rocky surface.

There was no further doubt.

They had reached the isle.

But at what point?"

And how far were they from the cavern-like entrance to the river basin?

This was a question.

But the canoe was allowed to drift. There was plainly a strong current bearing them somewhere.

"Let us trust to the current," said Smith. "It took us into the place before."

But the words were barely out of his mouth when the gloom became suddenly intensified.

There was the sensation of having been carried under stone arches, and the air was hollow and resonant.

Then they knew that they were on their way again into the outlaws' den.

The apparent success of their undertaking gave them great cheer. It looked as if they might win.

## CHAPTER XV.

### WHICH IS THE END.

Once more Smith and the detectives found themselves drifting in the limpid island basin.

But this time it was under far different circumstances.

Before they were depending wholly upon strategy to gain their ends.

This time they were armed and equipped for conquest.

But, as before, they were astonished at the ease with which they were able to invade the place.

It certainly showed a fearful and fatal laxity of watchfulness on the part of the outlaws.

Indeed, Old King Brady was puzzled.

He could hardly understand it.

"It is very strange," he muttered. "What can they be thinking of?"

"It is all in our favor," said Big Tom, grimly. "All we want is to get into their fortress."

"Well, we are in it."

"Then we have victory in our grasp."

Plans were quickly laid.

Far up on the heights above the same vivid red lights burned.

But not a sound was heard, and nothing was seen of the outlaws.

Exultant and confident of victory the lumbermen disembarked silently from their canoes.

They began to climb the steep incline, and soon had reached the top.

The detectives, with Smith and Big Tom, were in advance.

Then they were able to see the outlaw camp.

But not an outlaw was to be seen.

The invaders walked quietly into the camp. A great surprise was in store for them.

It took but a little investigation to make the startling discovery that the camp was wholly deserted.

A swift search of the vicinity was made.

Not a gun was fired; not a man was seen, and the startling conviction dawned upon the attacking party that they were too late.

The birds had flown.

It was a curious fact.

"They are gone," cried Smith, in surprise; "but what on earth does it mean?"

"Give it up," said Big Tom. "Maybe they were afraid of us."

"With all the security this fortress affords?"

"It is strange."

"No, there is another reason," declared Old King Brady. "You may be sure of it. Something has occurred to decide them upon a change of base."

Out on the cliff they found an abandoned cannon.

It was certainly strange why the gang should give up their strongest and best retreat.

The detective went back to the cabins and went carefully through them.

Not a clew was found.

But a ghastly sight was revealed in one of the huts, which, however, they could not believe had anything to do with the desertion of the place.

A great pool of blood lay on the floor.

There were clots of it on the walls and the rude furniture.

But that was all.

It was enough to assure them that a dark crime had been enacted there, to be sure; but whether it was murder of some captive held for ransom or the result of a fight between rival rascals was not known.

What was to be done?

That was the question.

The detectives, Smith and Big Tom sat in the blaze of the big signal fire.

Suddenly Harry gave a start.

"Hist! Did you hear that?" he asked, tensely.

"What?"

"The report of a rifle."

"From what direction?" asked Big Tom, springing to his feet.

"Off to the north."

The party listened intently.



But the report was not repeated, and no other sound of consequence came to their hearing.

They settled down again to a fresh discussion of the situation.

"Well," said Old King Brady, finally, "it is plain that the foe have evacuated their stronghold. There is some reason for it."

"Yes."

"We shall discover that later. Just now it concerns us where they have gone."

"I don't see that we can give them chase until to-morrow," said Harry.

"No."

"Then we will make ourselves easy here at present."

"It is all we can do."

For some while they were silent, being buried deep in reflection. Suddenly one of the lumbermen came breathlessly into the fire-lit circle.

"Tom," he cried, "we've got one of the rascals."

"Eh?" cried Big Tom, leaping to his feet. "What do ye mean?"

"He is badly wounded. He made a big fight."

And into the firelight the lumbermen brought their captive.

He was a hard-featured ruffian of the worst class.

His wound was a painful, but not necessarily fatal, one, he being shot through the shoulder.

He begged piteously for mercy.

"Don't kill me, pards," he pleaded. "I'll do anything for ye, if ye won't. Give me my life, pards."

"Why, you unadulterated ass!" yelled Big Tom. "Do you think we are murderers? We ain't going to kill ye."

"But he might give us some information," said Old King Brady.

"Yas, I was going to say that," said Big Tom. "We'll give ye your life if ye'll tell us where the gang has gone."

The fellow made a complete confession.

After the rescue of Alice and Hugh, Young had gone down to Blaney's cabin again.

Here, in some inexplicable way, the two leaders of the Canada gang had quarreled.

The result was a fight to the death. Young was killed by a thrust through the heart with a knife.

This explained the presence of the blood clots in the cabin.

Blaney had been stricken with fearful remorse.

"He went crazy, I tell ye, as crazy as a loon," said the fellow. "He ordered us out of here, and started off in a canoe with three other men. I stayed here. That's all I kin tell ye. I reckon the gang is scattered everywhere."

"But he must have had some excuse for such strange actions," said Big Tom.

"He was crazy, I tell ye. That's what he was. He said the United States Army was up here and going to surround us."

"Well," said Big Tom, "I think we will go in chase of 'em. What do you say, friends?"

"A good idea," cried Old King Brady. "We will sweep them from the woods forever. Come on."

"Hold on," said Big Tom. "I will take one gang and go to the upper end of the lake. You go to the other end, and we will go straight south to the big lakes."

With this plan outlined it did not take them long to act.

The light of early morning found the entire force of lumbermen spreading through the Canada forest under the guidance of Big Tom.

But the detectives, with Smith, took their canoe and started for Roaring River.

They fancied that Blaney might try to get out of the region by that route.

Every part of the lake was thoroughly scoured. They put into every little cove and bay, and made a thorough search.

And their efforts were as naught until near dark.

Then suddenly from behind a little headland a boat shot into view.

It held four men.

One of them was instantly recognized as Blaney.

At the moment the outlaws did not see those in the canoe.

"By jove!" gasped Harry. "There is our game!"

Smith held the canoe steady while the Bradys seized their rifles.

At that instant Blaney saw them. A wild cry of terror pealed from his lips.

But the detectives covered the gang with their rifles.

"Up with your hands!" yelled Old and Young King Brady, in the same breath.

The gang in the approaching boat were taken completely by surprise, and threw their hands up without a protest.

"We surrender," they cried.

The next moment the canoe was alongside. Blaney was helpless with partial idiocy and fright. His crime had unseated his reason.

The detectives handcuffed the gang together, and started for Eagle Lake. Two days later they met Big Tom and his men there. Many of the outlaws escaped.

But the gang was broken up, and the Canada gang was known no more.

Smith returned to Chicago with the girl he loved and her brother, and Mrs. Maynard was made happy. It was a joyful restoration, and a successful ending of the case.

The Bradys returned to New York, and at once took up a new case, of which we may hear later.

THE END.

Read "THE BRADYS IN MONTANA; OR, THE GREAT COPPER MINE CASE," which will be the next number (102) of "Secret Service."

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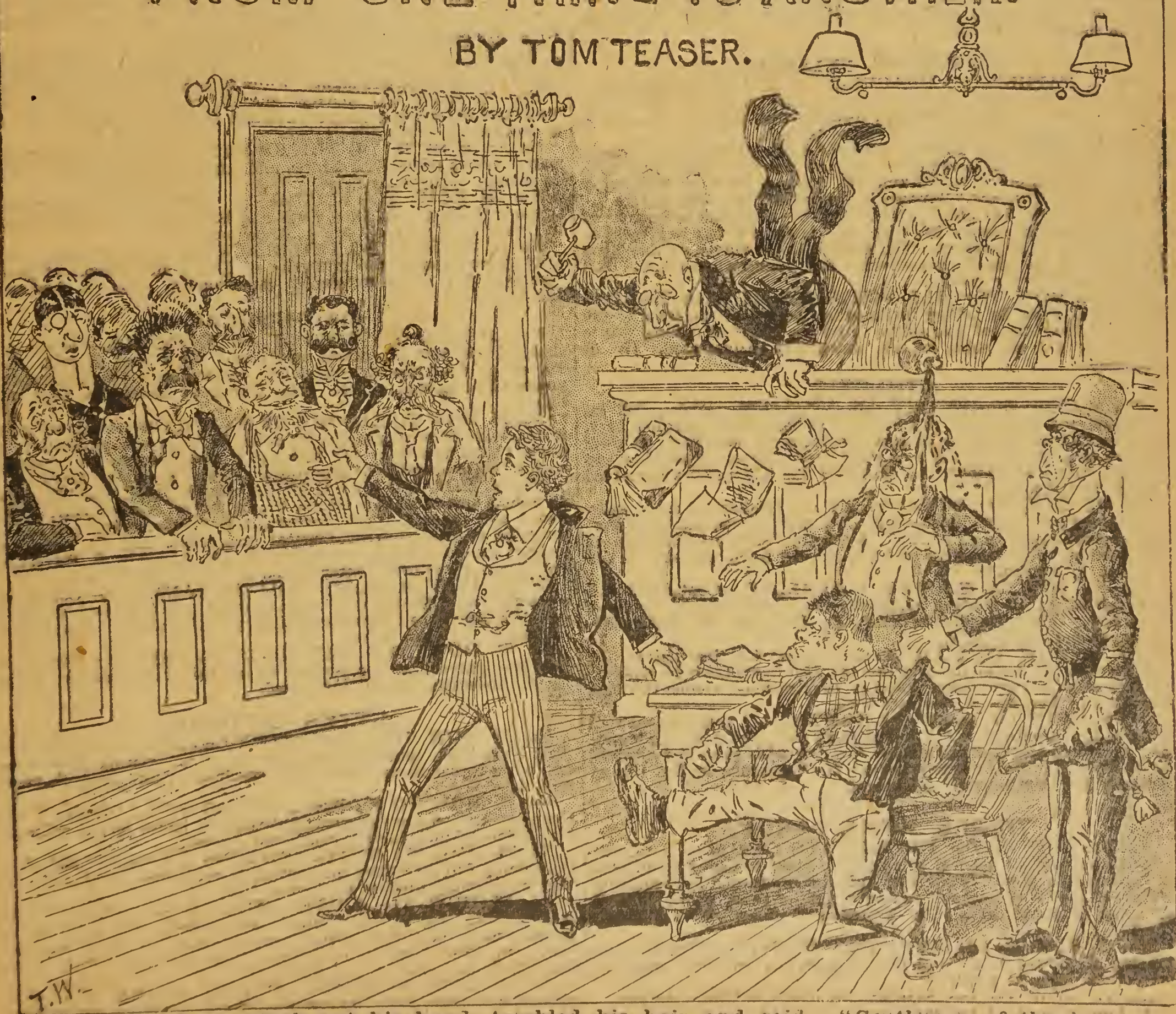
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